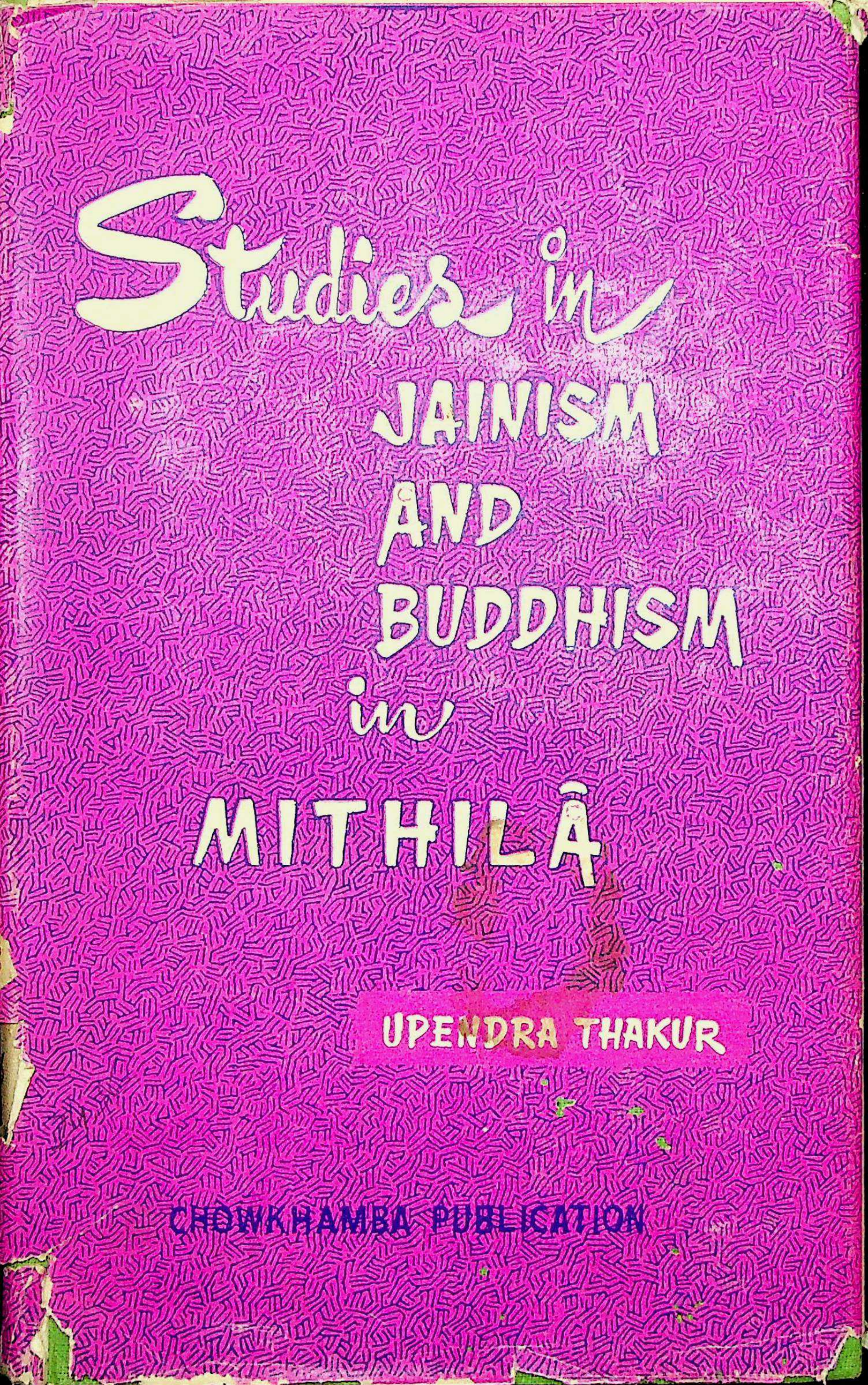

# Studies in JAINISM AND BUDDHISM in MITHILÂ

UPENDRA THAKUR

CHOWKHAMBA PUBLICATION

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# AND
# BUDDISM IN MITHILĀ

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# STUDIES IN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM IN MITHILĀ

BY

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*To*

*MY GURU*

*PROF. DR. J. N. BANERJEA*

WITH PROFOUND GRATITUDE

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# PREFACE

*I took up the study of this work about six years ago, but could not make any appreciable progress because of certain unavoidable circumstances beyond my control. The major part of the work was done in Gorakhpur when I joined the University of Gorakhpur as Assistant Professor of Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology in September, 1958. In 1959 when I re-joined the Patna University I undertook the work again, and I am glad that the work is now complete despite the numerous odds I had to face from time to time.*

*I am very much grateful to Dr. G. C. Pande, Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology, Gorakhpur University ( now Rajasthan University ); Dr. R. S. Sharma, Professor and Head of the Department of History, Patna University ; Śrī S. V. Sohoni, I. C. S. and Prof. Radha Krishna Choudhary, Head of the Department of History and Ancient Indian History and Culture, G.D. College, Begusarai, from whom I have received various kinds of help and suggestions in the course of this work. I must express my thanks to my esteemed friend, Śrī R. P. Shrivastava, M. Com. who has as usual helped me in all possible ways. I have also to acknowledge my debt to Śrī Rājeśwar Jhā, Office-incharge, Bihar Research Society, Patna and other friends but for whose efforts the publication of this work would have been further delayed. I am responsible for any errors of fact and judgement that may have remained unnoticed, for which I crave indulgence of the learned scholars.*

*Patna University*
*16-5-64*

**Upendra Thakur**

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| *ABORI.* | Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. |
| *AGI.* | Ancient Geography of India ( Cunningham ). |
| *AIE.* | Ancient Indian Education ( Mookerjee ). |
| *AIHT.* | Ancient Indian Historical Tradition ( Pargiter ). |
| *ARASI.* | Annual Reports of the Archæological Survey of India. |
| *ASB.* | Asiatic Society of Bengal. |
| *ASR.* | Archæological Survey Reports. |
| *CHI.* | Cambridge History of India, vol. I. |
| *DDG.* | Darbhanga District Gazetteer. |
| *DHNI.* | Dynastic History of Northern India ( Ray ). |
| *EHI.* | Early History of India ( Smith ). |
| *EI.* | Epigraphia Indica. |
| *HB.* | History of Bengal ( Majumdar ). |
| *HM.* | History of Mithilā ( Thakur ). |
| *HMI.* | History of Mediaeval Hindu India ( Vaidya ). |
| *IA.* | Indian Antiquary. |
| *IHQ.* | Indian Historical Quarterly. |
| *J.* | Jātaka. |
| *JASB.* | Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. |
| *JBBAS.* | Journal of the Bombay Branch of Asiatic Society. |
| *JBORS.* | Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society. |
| *JBRS.* | Journal of the Bihar Research Society. |
| *JGNJRI.* | Journal of the Gaṅgānātha Jhā Research Institute. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *JIH.* | Journal of Indian History. |
| *JOI.* | Journal of Oriental Institute. |
| *JRAS.* | Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. |
| *MDG.* | Muzaffarpur District Gazetteer. |
| *PAIOC.* | Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference. |
| *PHAI.* | Political History of Ancient India ( Raychaudhuri. ) |
| *PTS.* | Pāli Texts Society. |
| *ŚB.* | Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. |
| *SBE.* | Sacred Books of the East. |
| *VR.* | Varṇana Ratnākara. |

# STUDIES IN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM IN MITHILĀ

# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

There are few regions of India possessing an ancient civilisation about which we have less definite historical information than the region north of the Gaṅgā variously known as Videha, Tīrabhukti or Mithilā. Its history does not centre round feats of arms but round courts given to higher pursuits of learning. It was in the halls of the city of Mithilā that the great and unparalleled philosophical discussions ever attempted in the history of human thought were held. It was from the battlements of Simrāon that Harisiṁha, the last king of the Simrāon dynasty long defied the arms of the Muslim conquerors. The extant remains of the cities of these ancient kings still remind us of their glorious part in the political and cultural life of ancient India[1].

**The Land :**

Mithilā, the ancient country of the Maithilas, is the name of the tract lying between 25° 28′ and 26° 52′ N. Lat. and between 84° 56′ and 86° 46′ Long. It is bounded on the north by the Himālaya and on the east, south and west by the rivers Kośī ( Kauśikī ), Gaṅgā and Gaṇḍaka respectively. It comprised the present districts of Champaran, Saharsā, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, parts of the districts of Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Purneā and the Terāi under Nepal lying between the districts and the lower ranges of the Himālaya. It is a well marked natural region with its size varying in different ages. From the foot hills of the Himālaya in the north to the Gaṅgā in the south it is 100 miles broad and from the Mahānandā in the east to the Gaṇḍakī in the west it is 250 miles long. Its area is 25, 000 square miles[2].

---

[1] *HM*, pp. 1 ff.

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 2–4.

From the Purāṇas we learn that the territory of Mithilā extended from the river Kauśikī in the east to Gaṇḍakī in the west, and from the Gaṅgā in the south to the forest of the Himālaya in the north. The forest on the bank of the Gaṇḍakī was known as Campāraṇya. The *Śakti-saṁgama-tantra* says that " from the banks of the Gaṇḍakī ( *Gaṇḍakītīramārabhya* ) to the forest of Campā the country is called Videha, also known as Tīrabhukti"[1]. This *Gaṇḍakī-tīra* appears to indicate the southern boundary of the country. Campāraṇya ( modern Champāran ) seems to be the northern boundary. Moreover, the Mahānandā flowing through the districts of Purneā and Maldā ( now in West Bengal ) is the oldest bed of Kośī that should be taken as the eastern boundary of Mithilā at the very early stage. The name Tīrabhukti still survives in its modern form, Tirhut[2].

**The Name :**

The name Mithilā or Videha is said to have derived from king Videgha Māṭhava or Videha Mādhava who came from the banks of the Sarasvatī. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[3] narrates an interesting anecdote regarding the origin of this name[4], and we are told that the new settlers are the Māṭhavas or descendants of Māṭhava. The name of Mithi Vaideha, the second king in the epic and the Purāṇic lists, is reminiscent of Māṭhava Videgha.

Nimi, the son of Manu, came to this land of sacrifices and his son Mithi founded a kingdom which was named Mithilā after him. He was also named " Mithi " because of his birth from attrition. He was also called " Janaka " on account of his extraordinary birth and " Videha " as his father was bodiless. The country henceforwarded came to be known as " Mithilā "[5].

---

1. *Gāekwad Oriental Series*, vol. civ, p. 69, v. 2.
2. For other details, see *HM*, pp. 2 ff.
3. 1. 4. 1.
4. See the following pages.
5. For other references see *HM*, p. 6, fn. 1–3.

The *Viṣṇu* and *Bhāgavata Purāṇas* also explain how the country came to be known as Mithilā. The first mythical king of this part of the country was Nimi who was doomed to die by the curse of his preceptor, Vaśiṣṭha who was a great Ṛṣi and who was enraged by Nimi employing another priest, Gotama, to officiate at a sacrifice without Vaśiṣṭha's permission. After his death, all the great Ṛṣis assembled, and after bathing the dead body with its sacred water, attrited it. Out of it was produced a resplendent body who was named Mithi and his country came to be known as Mithilā[1].

According to Pāṇini, however, Mithilā is the country where enemies are crushed : " *Mithilādayaśca* " ; *mathyante 'tra mithilānagarī*[2]. This derivation seems more convincing and it is probable that like the great Bhārata tribe, after whom the entire Āryāvarta came to be christened as Bhāratavarṣa, the Maithilas, doubtless, a brave people, named the country of their glory and achievements after themselves[3].

Besides Mithilā, it has various other names too, such as Videha, Tīrabhukti, Tapobhūmi, Śāmbhavī, Suvarṇa-kānana, Mantili, Vaijayantī ( Janakapura ) etc.[4]. Of these Mithilā, Videha and Tīrabhukti are well known to the tradition and to the history as well. The name Videha we first of all come across in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* referred to above. Tīrabhukti or Tirhut is, however, a later term, also mentioned in the *Trikāṇḍa - Śeṣa*[5]. The name *Tīrabhukti* also occurs on some of the seals discovered in Vaiśālī belonging to the Gupta period ( 4th century A. D. ) : *Tīrabhuktau Vaiśālī Tārā.* ( Basārh excavations, 1903 - 04 ). This clearly refers to a land situated on the bank of the river and is a direct proof of the fact that Vaiśālī was known to have been in Tirhut[6].

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[1] For details see *Ibid,* pp. 4–11.

[2] *Uṇādi,* 60.

[3] *HM,* p. 7.

[4] *Bṛhadviṣṇu Purāṇa* ( *Mithilākhaṇḍa* ) gives twelve names.

[5] p. 59.

[6] For detailed discussion, see *HM,* pp. 8–11.

We have yet another interpretation of this term. According to some scholars, the word, Tirhut is a corruption of Tṛhutam *i.e.* the country of three sacrifices— ( i ) the sacrifice at the birth of Jānakī or Sītā who married Rāma, ( ii ) Dhanuṣayajña or the sacrifice on the occasion when the great celestial bow was broken by Rāma and ( iii ) the sacrifice in honour of the marriage of Rāma and Sītā[1]. This interpretation, however, seems far-fetched, and the name was popular as far back as the fourth century A. D., if not earlier.

**The People :**

Mithilā or Tirhut is the land of the people who have carried conservatism to the excess of uncouthness. It is a country with an ancient history, traditions of which it retains to the present day. It is a land under the domination of a sept of Brāhmaṇas, extraordinarily devoted to the mint, anise, and cummin of the law. For centuries it has been a tract too proud to admit other nationalities to intercourse on equal terms. For centuries it has passed through conquest after conquest, from the north, from the east and from the west without changing its ancestral peculiarities. The story goes that the Brāhmaṇas of Mithilā did not spare even Rāmacandra for, at the time of his marriage they showed the same pride[2] which is characteristic of their descendants of the twentieth century. This has been a very important trait of their character as a result of which the Brāhmaṇical domination has left its ineffaceable marks upon the nature of the rest of the population.

Mithilā is one of the most congested parts of India. Of the various districts, Muzaffarpur is the most and Darbhanga the least densely populated, but the pressure on the soil even here is as great as 870 to the square mile. It is essentially a rural land and the great majority of the people have been engaged in agricultural pursuits since time immemorial, but they

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1. *Bṛhadviṣṇu Purāṇa* ( *Mithilākhaṇḍa* ).
2. cf. the curse pronounced by Rāmacandra on the Maithila Brāhmaṇas, *HM*, Chap. I.

have hitherto developed no marked tendency to go to the urban areas. As a result of this non-commercial and non-enterprising attitude, the inhabitants of the area are none-too-prosperous. Its inhabitants increase and multiply and impoverish the earth. They are reluctant to seek other means of life than agriculture which does not yield enough for their sustenance or other lands on which to practise the one art with which they are acquainted.

The age-old geographical isolation has no doubt profoundly influenced the character of the people. Even when the lands to the west of the river Gaṇḍaka and south of the Gaṅgā were constantly subjected to turbulent influence that naturally accompanied the invasions of the Muslim invaders and the subsequent establishment of the Muslim rule for a pretty long time, Mithilā, to the north of the Gaṅgā, remained more or less at peace under Hindu kings of the Karṇāṭa and Oinavāra dynasties[1]. The results of this long seclusion may be seen even in the present day as the people in general are more backward and less enterprising than those of other parts.

Of the principal castes inhabiting the land for centuries mention may be made of the Brāhmaṇas, Rājpūtas, Bābhanas or Bhūmihāras, Goālās or Ahīras, Dosādhas, Dhānukas, Koiris, Mallāhas, Chamāras, Kevaṭas, Khatawes, Kūrmīs, Musaharas, Tāntis and Telis—all Hindus. Among the Muhammadans, Sheikhs, Jolāhās, Dhuniās and Kunjarās are well represented. Besides these, the Deoharas and the Dhīmaras or Dhībaras are two small castes peculiar to the land, forming separate castes by themselves. Moreover, there are many other small castes that do not merit much attention.

All through the ages the Maithila society has experienced no remarkable changes in its centuries-old social structure. It stood rock-like and survived all catastrophes, resisting outside influence with all its vigour and force. It is true that numerous books on Smṛti, daily duties, marriages, religious rites, prohibited degrees of relationship, performance of and officiating at sacrifices, purification, the duties of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Śūdras and Vaiśyas, agriculture, commerce etc. were either written or digested or complied throughout the centuries, but it is equally true that nothing new, nothing revolutionary, nothing extra-ordinary in the shape of changes in the society is perceptible anywhere during the centuries preceding the current one, inspite of hundreds of books produced. On the other hand, majority of the law-givers came out openly in support of the deep-rooted caste-system and pernicious social evils and vices through their extra-ordinary jugglery of words. They stubbornly advocated *status quo* in the social order and suggested new methods by way of social regulations to make it more and more elaborate and rigid.

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[1] *HM*, Chaps. V-VI.

The advent of the fourteenth century witnessed a significant change in the social status of the Maithilas–significant because it violently shook up the very structure of the society. Instead of giving a progressive outlook to it, it was made more rigid and conservative. The new change was the introduction of the Maithila *Kulīnism* aimed at re-organising the Maithila society (1310-1313), the credit for which goes entirely to king Harisiṁha Deva, the last king of the Karṇāṭa dynasty[1]. As a consequence, in their social structure the Maithilas gave birth to an elaborate system of geneological records called in common parlance, the *Pañjīs*. It is claimed that the system was introduced with a view to protecting the "purity of blood" in Maithila society by making people record their ancestry, and avoiding the forbidden degrees of relationship and marriages. This so-called social reform, most reactionary in character and outlook, was enforced and imposed on the society under the royal patronage and supervision, and the entire State machinery was geared up to work to its thorough completion and consummation. Accordingly, the Brāhmaṇas–let alone the other castes – were now forced to split up themselves into four sub-classes–the

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[1] *HM*, p. 359.

*Śrotriyas*, the *Yogyas*, the *Pāñjibādhas*, and the *Jaibāras* in order of grade and merit. We have already discussed the various gradations with all their implications elsewhere[1].

These rules further gave birth to a new class – the class of *Pañjikāras* and *Ghaṭakas* ( *i.e.* the marriage - contractor ). The Pañjikāras, in compliance with the strict royal order, kept these geneological records of gigantic proportions and were fully authorised to issue such " marriage - certificate " ( *adhikāra-patra* or *adhikāramālā* ) to the intending parties without which no marriage could be negotiated or performed.

Like the Brāhmaṇas, the Kāyasthas were also divided into two classes – the *Kulīnas* ( *i.e.* of high birth ) and the *Gṛhasthas* ( *i.e.* of ordinary birth ). The same *mūlas* were also thrust on them as those on the Brāhmaṇas. They also got the " certificate of marriage " by the Pañjikāras, called the Kāyastha-Pañjikāras. Moreover, such geneological records were not limited to Brāhmaṇas and Kāyasthas only, those of Kṣatriyas are also known to have existed[2].

In addition to *gotras* or exogamous groups, they were also distinguished according to their *mūla* and *ḍīha*. The *mūla* or origin is the name of village where the earliest known members of the *gotra* lived, while the *ḍīhas* refer to the villages where their descendants subsequently settled. And, they are even now known and distinguished accordingly.

The exponent of this outstanding social reform might have had some honest motive – for instance, preserving social order and encouraging virtuous and noble life – behind their zeal, but the only motive we can see through now, seems to have been the so-called " preservation of the purity of blood ". This, in turn, instead of proving a boon, spelt severe curses on the society and caused devastating impact on the morale of the people.

Besides other evils, a new ferocious monster of *Bikauās* or the so-called *Kulinas* or the *Bhalamānusas* was born. The exaggerated importance placed on the value of being born in a high *kula* gave a licence to these gentlemen of the society who gave up all their sacred practices and adopted marriage as profession instead. The emergence of the worst type of polygamy was a natural corollary to the undue and undeserving importance attached to this particular class. They married sometimes thirty to forty wives, and as a result, the number of widows grew awfully staggering for, the death of one man caused the ultimate tragic widowhood of atleast twenty to thirty women. Thus, the ill-fated girls were reduced to a band of despised creatures worse than the slaves. It was only recently that this evil practice was done away with. But the "rules" have been implicitly followed through centuries up to the present time. Harisiṁha, the greatest protagonist of these rules, is no more. Even his family has faded away from the memory of the people, except a few students of history. But the "marriage rules" are unaffected and yet dominate the social life of the Maithilas with all their vicious implications[1].

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[1] see *HM*, pp. 360 ff.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 362, fn. 2.

The other castes are commonly regarded as of mixed descent and various legends are current as to their genesis. Many of their religious ceremonies have been the same as among the Brāhmaṇas. Most of these castes, including the Bābhanas or Bhuinhāra or Bhūmihāraka are said to have remained Buddhists for a long time, and later switched on to cultivation as their main occupation., possibly after the large-scale destruction of the Buddhist monasteries by the Muslim invaders. The Bhuinhāras were probably an offshoot of the Brāhmaṇas themselves as their *mūlas* and *gotras* tend to suggest.

But, the search for atleast some grains of divine enlightenment fallen from the overflowing store of the ancient masters in this erstwhile "home of Hindu enlightenment" is now in vain. It is a sad reflection on the Hindu social system that in Mithilā "where it reached a high degree of development, its influences on the material and moral condition of the people at large were in the direction, not of amelioration but of degradation. The priestly and intellectual aristocracy was so predominant that it set itself to suppress any attempt at social or mental emancipation outside its pale"[1]. Their attempt was so successful that it is in this same ancient centre of learning and enlightenment that, inspite of the spread of western education and culture, ignorance, fanaticism and religious susceptibilities are yet staggeringly rampant and inflammable and the state of the lower classes is most degraded and most depressed and the proportion of the illiterate is the greatest[2].

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[1] For full discussion, see *Ibid.*, pp. 358–366.

[2] For details, see *DDG*, 39–41.

**History :**

From the remotest dawn of history Mithilā had had a unique and distinct position in the body-politic of Āryāvarta. It was ruled over by a gallaxy of philosopher - kings. The story of the colonisation of this part of Āryāvarta by the Aryan settlers is indeed fascinating–a story which is vividly told in the *Vedas* themselves and which has hardly any parallel in the history of mankind. The adventurous clan of the Videhas, led by Agni Vaiśvānara and their priests of the Gautama's race, dashed from across the Sadānīrā ( the modern Gaṇḍakī ), swooped down upon the marshy and uncultivated land, caused Agni, the Fire-God, to taste it through sacrifices and ultimately established itself into the region which later came to be renowned as the famous land of the Videhas under the Janaka dynasty, a supreme seat of learning and philosophy in the ancient world[3].

Long before the advent of the Buddha and also during his life-time, the eight clans including the great Videhas and the Licchavis inhabiting this land, formed the confederation of the Vṛjis and established the famous republic of the Vṛjis or the Licchavis, probably the oldest republic in the history of the world. No republics except that of the Licchavis lasted in history for a thousand years. Neither Athens nor the republics of Venice and Genova can claim a similar greatness. The non-monarchical tradition with the departure of the Licchavis from the Indian political stage became a thing of the past, and at the end of the 5th century A. D. republics disappeared from Hindu India. Republicanism was the first to begin the great departure to lead the dirge of political *nirvāṇa*. The community now ceased to breathe freedom and the old life refused to return[1].

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[1] C. J. Stevenson Moore, *Muzaffarpur Survey & Settlement Report; DDG*, p. 22.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *HM*, pp. 5-7 & Chap. II.

With the fall of the mighty Licchavis, Ajātaśatru occupied Vaiśālī and became the master of Mithilā. Thus, Mithilā formed a part of the Magadhan empire, but it still retained its distinctive features. The Mauryas and the Guptas honoured its age-old democratic traditions. The historical matrimonial alliance between the Guptas and the Licchavis was largely responsible for the rise and eminence of the Guptas who have referred to this episode in their epigraphic records. Samudragupta used to refer to himself with pride as "the son of the daughter of a Licchavi" ( *Licchavi-dauhitra* ). Under them, Mithilā now came to be known as Tīrabhukti ( *Tīrabhuktau-Vaiśālī-tārā* ).

The exit of the Guptas was promptly followed by the coming in of other powers. Almost all the upstart political adventurers, attempted, once atleast, to reach the foot of the Himālaya for the attainment of the much coveted, though hollow, glory of "earth - conqueror". It had thus fast developed into a cock-pit of power politics, and witnessed the glorious rise and tragic fall of various powers on and from her political horizon. Mithilā, after Harṣa's death, came to be ruled over and ravaged by the Tibetans, the later Guptas, the Maukharis, the Pālas, the Gurjara-Pratihāras, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Candelas in succession, till the advent of the Karṇāṭa king Nānyadeva, the founder of the celebrated Simrāon dynasty ( 1097 A. D. ). It was, therefore, after a long spell of nearly about fourteen hundred years of subjugation since the break-up of the Videhan monarchy and the Vajjian confederacy that she rose again under the brave and inspiring leadership of Karṇāṭa Nānyadeva and asserted her independence. And, the foundation of the Karṇāṭa or Simrāon dynasty ushered in a new era—an era of kingdom-making, an era of splendid glory and great achievements. Under Nānya and his descendants Mithilā prospered exceedingly and became again a unique centure of philosophy, law and literature[1].

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 62-66 & Chap. III.

After a rule of two centuries and a quarter over Mithilā and a direct rule of about a century over the Nepal valley, the celebrated Karṇāṭa dynasty made its tragic exit from the political stage of Northern India. In 1324 A. D, it came under Muhammadan rule. A little later ( c. 1354 A. D. ) Emperor Feroz Shah Tughlak handed over the Rāj of Tirhut to Kāmeśvara Ṭhākura, a Maithila Śrotriya Brāhmaṇa who founded a new dynasty known as Oinavāra dynasty[2]. Mithilā was ruled over by the native Brāhmaṇa kings of this dynasty for nearly two centuries. During this period also Mithilā was the leader of thought in North - eastern India. It was really the golden age in the history of Mithilā.

The fall of this dynasty was followed by a short interregnum during which the Muslims succeeded in wresting power[3]. Akbar, the great, it is said, bestowed the Rāj of Tirhut ( c. 1556 A. D. ) on the Brāhmaṇa scholar, Mm. Maheśa Ṭhākura, the founder of the Khaṇḍavalā dynasty or the Darbhanga Rāj[4] of which the late Mahārājādhirāja Sir Kāmeśvara Siṁha was the last scion in whom vested the cultural and social leadership of Mithilā.

**Cultural Achievements ;**

Though the end of the Karṇāṭas and the Oinavāras was tragic, their period made brilliant contributions in the spheres of art and literature. In this respect, the Mithilā of the Karṇāṭas and the Oinavāras resembled very much that of the

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[1] For details see *Ibid*, Ch. iv-v; R. K. Choudhary in *ABORI*, XXXV, pp. 91-121.

[2] *Ibid*, Ch. vi; R. K. Choudhary in *JBRS.*, XL, pp. 99-121.

[3] *HM*, Ch. viii.

[4] see the author's forthcoming book, *History of Mithilā*, vol. ii, Ch. iii.

Janakas and Yājñavalkya. The two periods, though standing apart by about four thousand years, have somewhat their similar contributions to the growth of human mind in general and Indian culture in particular.

A great centre of learning from the very beginning of its history, Mithilā stands apart pre-eminently as the land given to intellectual pursuits and consequently to speculations about the spiritual well-being of man. It is the celebrated land of the Upaniṣads which embody the highest truths ever found out by man about life, soul and hereafter, and record the great impetus given to those speculations by the unrivalled Janaka ( Kṛti Janaka ), the philosopher - king of Mithilā. It is the land of the disinterested Videhas where the great *Brahmavidyā*, the essence of Vedānta and the kernel round which Hindu culture has grown and developed, was perfected. Thus, it is the land which bore the torch that has radiated light throughout India and even beyond through all these ages.

Speaking of Mithilā's contributions to Indian culture one is reminded of that unique name, Yājñavalkya who first developed the *Mādhyandini* branch of *Yajurveda*, universally known as *Śukla* which was embraced by the whole of North India. In the field of Civil Law ( *Smṛti* ) Yājñavalkya's work ( *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* ) superseded that of Manu ( *Manu-smṛti* ). The continuous development since his time in ritualistic and Civil Law was so tremendous that later it came to be duly recognised and respected as the Mithilā School of Hindu Law. Among the great Maithila contributors to this branch of literature ( *Smṛti* ), special mention may be made of Lakṣmīdhara, Śrīkara, Halāyudha, Bhavadeva, Śrīdhara, Aniruddha, and Caṇḍeśvara and many others who shine the brightest on the pages of history. The biography of Yājñavalkya is indeed the cultural history of his country in his times. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that "from the days of *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* down to the modern times the land of Mithilā has produced writers whose names are illustrious."[1]

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[1] For details, cf. *Supra*, Ch. ii.

A stronghold of conservative orthodoxy, Mithilā also proved to be a very congenial soil for Jainism and Buddhism to thrive on. It was the land of the birth of many of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra was an inhabitant of Vaiśālī[1]. Similarly, Buddhism had its stronghold in Vaiśālī. Buddha lived for sometime near Vaiśālī and had high praise for the Licchavis. Even after his death, Tīrabhukti continued to be an important Buddhist centre. The second council of the Buddhists was held in the city of Vaiśālī. It was here that the creed was divided into *Yānas* i.e. the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna. Tirhut played its important part in the development of Mahāyāna, which was later responsible for the growth of the Tāntrika cult of which Mithilā still continues to be an important centre[2].

In the realm of knowledge Mithilā's achievement and contributions have been so prolific, so very profound and so far-reaching that they have no parallel. All branches of knowledge have been cultivated here and enriched. Its contributions to philosophy of which India is justly proud, are, however, superb. Nyāya was first systematised by Gautama, and in the twelfth century Gaṅgeśa gave it a new orientation. In the history of Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā, Udyotakara, Maṇḍana, Prabhākara, Vācaspati ( 1 ), Pārthasārathi Miśra, Udayanācārya, Murāri Miśra, Gaṅgeśa, Pakṣadhara, Bhavanātha and Śaṁkara are some of the illustrious names[3].

During the time of the great Gaṅgeśa ( 1200 A. D. onwards) Mithilā was a celebrated seat of learning and scholars from different parts of the country came to receive highest training in Logic and other branches of learning in the universally reputed University of Mithilā. It was here that the great Raghunātha Śiromaṇī received his training in Logic and later started the famous University of Nadiā in Bengal. After Gaṅgeśa, a long line of scholars in Mithilā kept up the glorious tradition of Mīmāṁsā for centuries. This brilliant tradition was gloriously maintained by the Brāhmaṇa kings of the Khaṇḍavalā dynasty or the Darbhanga Rāj till the middle of the present century.

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[1] *Supra*, Ch. iii.

[2] *Supra*, Ch. iv.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. ii.

**Literature :**

Nor has literature or grammar been neglected. An important school of grammar was started by Padmanābha Datta with his *Supadma Vyākaraṇa* and its various supplements. On Rhetoric and Erotic some of the most popular books were written by Bhānudatta Miśra, the author of *Rasamañjarī*. Ratneśvara commented upon the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* in rhetorics, while in erotics Jyotirīśvara wrote *Pañcaśāyaka* and *Raṅgaśekhara*, off-quoted in mediaeval Sanskrit literature. Among literary compositions, Bhavadatta's commentary on the epic-poem, *Naiṣadha-caritam* is yet studied with great interest. Pṛthvīdhara Ācārya's commentary on *Mṛcchakaṭika* is yet another popular work. Besides, Jayadeva, the author of *Prasannarāghava* ; Murāri, the author of *Anargharāghava*, Govinda Ṭhākura, the author of *Kāvyapradīpa* ; Jayadeva, the author of *Candrāloka* ; Śaṁkara, the author of *Rasārṇava*; Kṛṣṇadatta, the author of *Gītagopīpati* and others illumined the field of poetry and poetics. In Lexicon, Śrīkara-Ācārya's commentary on the *Amarakośa* is a remarkable gem of Sanskrit literature.

Maithilī, the language of Mithilā, was also cultivated and greatly enriched during this period. Jyotirīśvara deserves special mention for his composition of the earliest extant work in Maithilī, *Varṇana-Ratnākara*. His period was indeed the golden age of Maithilī and Sanskrit studies. As a matter of fact, there is abundance of literary work in Maithilī—dramas, poetry, prose—dating from about the eleventh century.

While the Kāmeśvara - period ( the founder of the Oinavāra dynasty ) was made famous in the literary world by the euridite and versatile scholar, Jagaddhara, the Mithilā of Śivasiṁha was illumined by the divine sparks of the celebrated poet, Vidyāpati whose name has come down to the posterity in connection with Maithilī songs as a house-hold word throughout the whole of Bengal and Bihar. Vidyāpati ( born c. 1360 or c. 1340 A. D. ) the contemporary of Chaucer ( born c. 1340 A. D. ), the great English poet—was author of *Kīrttilatā* and specially the anthology, *Padāvalī*—songs that stirred up the later Vaiṣṇava writers and preachers of Bengal and reverberated like the enchanting heavenly music through the forests, rivers and dusty villages of Mithilā. He also wrote on *Smṛti* ( *Vibhāgasāra*, *Gaṅgā - vākyāvali* and *Dāna-vākyāvalī* ); on *Niti* or moral tales ( *Śaiva - sarvasvasāra* and *Puruṣa - Parīkṣā* ) ; on Pūjā ( *Śaiva - sarvasvasāra* and ( *Durgā-bhakti - taraṅgiṇī* ) and on literary composition ( *Likhanāvali* ).

The days of Vidyāpati ( c. 1340 - 1448 A. D. ) were the days of the glory of the Mithilā University. A scion of a distinguished family of scholars, a voluminous writer, a widely read scholar and a Sanskrit poet of eminence, a charming lyric poet and the first of old Vaiṣṇava master singers, a general and an administrator and the brightest jewel of Śivasiṁha's court, Vidyāpati overshadows all Vernacular poets, even Caṇḍīdāsa, " the child of nature ". His short hymns of prayer and praise became great favourite of the modern Vaiṣṇava reformer of Bengal – Caitanyadeva and through him his songs ( *padāvali* ) have become as well known in Bengali households as the Bible is in an English one. He was thus a poet and finished scholar, whose similes and metaphors, choice of expressions and the higher flight of imaginations are brilliant poetical feats which at once captivate the ear and dazzle the eyes. The scene of sensuality and lust in his poems are strange combination of holy and unholy, of earthly and heavenly. His earlier poems are full of sensualism, his later of mystic ideas[1].

The Khaṇḍavalā dynasty ( 1556 A. D. onwards ) also made its definite contributions to different branches of Sanskrit learning and Maithilī literature[1]. There is an interesting anecdote that Mm. Maheśa Ṭhākura, the founder of this dynasty, greatly inspired the saint-poet Tulasīdāsa by saying that his "Rāmāyaṇa" ( *Rāmacarita - mānasa* ) would be loved more and more by the people in future. This encouragement, we are told, was offered at Kāśī while Maheśa Ṭhākura was proceeding to the Delhi Durbar.

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[1] For details, see *HM*, pp. 375–82.

Summing up, it may be said, that altogether Mithilā was "the home where the enlightened and the learned might always find a generous patron, peace and safety, where courts were devoted to learning and culture and where poets and philosophers lived in honour and affluence".

**Sources :**

The sources of our present study are almost the same as provide the basis of the political and cultural history of the land. The study has, therefore, to be mainly based on literary sources—Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina—the precise dating of which has deen a baffling problem and as such we have adopted the generally accepted view regarding the chronology of the literary texts. In our case we have literature enormous in extent and most varied in character dwelling upon the various aspects connected with our study.

Further, the Brāhmaṇical and non-Brāhmaṇical texts seek to establish the supremacy of their own faith and hardly show any sympathy for the views of their opponents. On the other hand, they endeavour to establish their own view-points with a missionary zeal as it were, and spare none in the wordy duel and bitter wranglings that had become the order of the day for centuries. We have, therefore, to be very cautious while handling these texts and compare and contrast the conflicting nature of evidences from the rival sources before finally pronouncing our own judgement or arriving at definite conclusion.

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[1] See the author's forthcoming book, *History of Mithilā*, vol. ii, ch. v.

Literary sources are sometimes corroborated and supplemented by archaeological sources. Innumerable finds of Jaina and Buddhist antiquities in various parts of Mithilā in recent years make us bold to convincingly refute some of the purely conventional, dogmatic and fantastic views about the rise, growth and popularity of Jainism and Buddhism in Mithilā. Orthodox scholars and local Paṇḍitas fastidiously cling to the view that Mithilā was not in the least influenced by the rise of these new orders nor were the inhabitants ever worried over the growing popularity of Buddhism. Archaeological evidences on the other hand have altogether a different tale to tell. They unequivocally speak of the great crisis of conscience that siezed the land of Mithilā for many centuries. They further confirm that Jaina and Buddhist religions were an article of faith with a section of the society just as Brāhmaṇism was with the majority of the people.

The present work has been undertaken not only to provide an adequate treatment of the rise, growth and influence of Jainism and Buddhism but also to present a connected picture of the various religions and philosophies that inspired and characterised the religious outlook of the people of Mithilā through the ages. In order to explain and illustrate certain positive developments in this field wherever possible comparisons have been made between different systems that clashed and shaped the currents and cross-currents of the religious life of the people of this ancient land.

## CHAPTER II

# Mithilā and Brāhmaṇical Religion and Philosophy

**Introduction :**

In the post-Vedic age the religious convictions of the people were more or less the same as they were in the Vedic age. While the popular superstitious beliefs in spirits, imps, spells, incantations and witch-crafts prevailed as before, the sacrificial aspect of the religion developed tremendously. With the efflux of time the Ṛgvedic monotheistic and monistic tendencies became more and more marked. The Prajāpati-story contains in it the germs of the later doctrines of avatāras or divine incarnations. It bears a new spirit of symbolism and spirituality. In the *Brāhmaṇa* Prajāpati stands for Puruṣa and the sacrifices are conceived as constantly recurring in order to maintain the universe.

**The Religion of the Upaniṣads :**

The Upaniṣads also take up the same doctrine and elaborate it. It deals with *Brahman* or *Ātman* as the only underlying and ultimate reality. The Upaniṣads indeed expound a new religion which was opposed to the sacrificial ceremonial. It represents the philosophical aspect of Hinduism and aims at the deliverance from mundane existence by the absorption of the individual into soul ( *Brahma* ) through correct knowledge. Ritual is useless for such an aim and knowledge is all important : *tat tvam asi*—that art thou "that dwelleth in every thing, that guideth all beings within, the inward guide, immortal"[1]. Thus *Brahman* or Absolute is grasped and definitely expressed for the first time in the history of human thought in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[2] by the great seer Yājñavalkya. It is these various Upaniṣadic doctrines—along with the doctrines of Māyā, Karma, Mukti. Transmigration etc. interpreted anew in each period — that have dominated Indian thought ever since.

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[1] *HM*, pp. 94–95.

[2] iii.4.1 iv.5.1.

But, these higher subtleties of religion were confined to the intellectual section of the society and the common people did not understand these obstruse theological and philosophical speculations. They stuck to the worship of the dieties of the Ṛgvedic period. These deities were, however, not so prominent as Indra and Varuṇa. Rudra or Śiva, the great God and Lord of animate beings; Viṣṇu, the deliverer of mankind in distress and other gods now came into prominence. This movement was parallel with the development of philosophy in Mithilā and elsewhere. It led to the religions of modern India.

But the Upaniṣadic age is remarkable in as much as it witnessed revolutionary changes in the religious outlook of the people, which was in the following centuries responsible for the rise and growth of two new heretical sects—Jainism and Buddhism. The Brāhmaṇas or the priests went to the extreme in exploiting the religious beliefs and fantastic superstitions of the masses which culminated in a sort of intellectual revolt in Mithilā and other parts of North India. The period intervening the Vedic and the Upaniṣadic ages, i. e., the age of Brāhmaṇa may actually be termed as the age of sacrificial ceremonials. The society was gradually passing from pure and simple nature of devotion to that of artificialities. The Śatapatha period was still the golden days of the āryans. It referred to worship and adore and gave only a subordinate place to rigidness and privations. Devotion of mind was regarded as the predominant factor in their religious life[1]. It was, however, not without the signs of those competitions that gradually eat up the vitality and sound the death-note of a great race. Unfortunately the tradition of *ṚK* composition was now given a go-by and the meaning (i. e., meditation) of the Vedic *Ṛcās* and *mantras* lost all its significance. The Hindu theory that religions do not come from without but from within was

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1. *ŚB*. 1, 4, 4, 1. " मनश्च ह वै वाक् च भुजौ देवभ्यो यज्ञः वहतः "

ridiculously ignored. It was now a thing beyond their knowledge, beyond their access, beyond their comprehension. The priests simply got them by heart and their meaning true or false—became exclusively their own property. The result was obvious. These *mantras* in course of time came to be regarded as a thing of magic—known only to the priests or *Yājñikas*. Fast steeped in superstitions and pseudo-religious beliefs, the people acclaimed them as gods on the earth ( *Bhūdevas* ). Numerous intricacies were now introduced in the sacrifices and the ceremonies and rituals grew into infinite. Sacrifices were continued for years and hundreds of priests were engaged for the purpose. The commands of the *Bhūdevas* must be obeyed in any case, or else, they would have to face innumerable divine calamities.

These extremely rigid forms of religious sacrifices evoked spiritual unrest and revolt and voices of protests were uttered by intellectual giants like Yājñavalkya, Janaka Videha, Ajātaśatru of Kāśī, Pravāhaṇa Jaivali and many other representative thinkers of the age who refused to submit to the hierarchical pretensions of the Brāhmaṇas and asserted their right of performing sacrifices without the intervention of the priests. These protests ultimately gave rise to a new spiritual force and the Upaniṣadic philosophers accorded the knowledge of *Brahman* and *Ātman* the supreme place. Thus a new age dawned and a new wave of thought engulfed the whole country which heralded a glorious chapter in the history of human thought and Mithilā's contributions to it have been second to none[1].

In the following period the Brāhmaṇical religion or the religion of the Vedas remained confined to a small section of the people. Among the various revolts springing up inevitably against Upaniṣadic religion two were most important in the centuries before Christ—Jainism and Buddhism. These religions found many followers among the inhabitants of Mithilā and Vaiśālī. But, inspite of their great popularity a great body of the people of the Vajji country remained staunch followers of their ancient faith. Indeed, the religious belief of the Licchavis in general was not different from the form of worship prevalent in other parts of North India[1].

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[1] For details, see *HM*, pp. 94-99.

Throughout the centuries the Maithilas had been orthodox in their religious outlook. It is true, the Buddha had many followers among the inhabitants of the land, but his influence disappeared soon after the decline and fall of the Buddhist order. The priestly and intellectual aristocracy became once more predominant after the revival of Brāhmaṇism during the time of the Śuṅgas and the imperial Guptas. It set to itself to suppress any attempt at social or mutual emancipation outside its pale. Rigid rules for Śūdras and other than Brāhmaṇas were formulated and enforced. Elaborate treatises on religious rites, gifts, ritual for consecration of houses, temples, divine images, rules for performing *śrāddhas*, philosophy of the *bhakti* doctrines and the duties enjoined to the followers of that doctrine, the *Bhāgavata Sampradāya*, philosophical disquisition on sacrificial rites, religious duties of Śūdras and women were written mostly by the same law-givers.

## S'iva : S'akti and Viṣṇu :

The people of Mithilā were strong believers in *Varṇāśrama-dharma* and simple devotion to Hindu gods and deities. The three main figures who have inspired and animated their souls through the ages, are Śiva, Śakti and Viṣṇu. They valued them equally as capable of giving supernatural rewards. The three-fold marks ( yet visible ) on the forehead of the Maithilas represent the following symbols— the horizontal lines marked with ashes represented their devotion to Śiva; the vertical sandal-paste in white represented their faith in Viṣṇu and the dot of sandal-paste in red or of vermillion represented their veneration for Śakti.

The worship of Śiva was, however, most wide-spread among the men and women-folks ( especially the Brāhmaṇas ). The popularity of full fasting on ( *Kṛṣṇapakṣa* ) *Caturdaśī* ; the worship of lacs of clay-made *Śiva-liṅgas* on special occasions; the two kinds of popular songs of Śiva — *Nacārī* and *Maheśavāṇī* and the volumes of pure devotional songs composed by poets—from Vidyāpatī down to Candra Jhā ( Candā Jhā ) and Śiva temples in almost all the villages ( even now ) definitely point to the great place that Śiva occupied ( and occupies ) in their hearts.

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[1] For details, see, *Supra.* ch. iii, iv.

The literary sources apart, archæological finds also speak of the great popularity and veneration in which Lord Śiva was held in Mithilā. Respect for *Nandī* seems to have been great which indicates that even his *vāhana* had a great place in the Śiva sampradāya. The *Bull* had a respectable position and we learn from the Pancobh copper plate of Saṁgrāmagupta[1], a feudatory of the Karṇāṭas of Mithilā—that the bull was the insignia of that family, as Saṁgrāmagupta himself was a devout worshipper of Maheśvara. Further, the images discovered in Birpur and Barāipur and other places show that almost all the sects prevalent during the Pāla period and after, were known to the people of this area[2].

Moreover, from the discoveries made in Baherā and other places it appears that the phallic emblem of Śiva was more popular in the dominion of the Karṇāṭas. Large numbers of *phalli* have been discovered in different parts of Mithilā. *Ekamukhaliṅga* variety is the commonest one though *Caturmukhaliṅga* has also been noticed in different parts of Tirhut, the best specimen being one at Bheetha belonging to the Pāla period. The *arghya* and *nālā* ( both at Baherā and Birpur ) bear wavy incisions indicating that the water usually poured on the top of the *liṅga* passing along the surface of the four busts on the *liṅga*. The Baherā sculptures are finely carved specimens of the 13th - 14th century and are in keeping with the Karṇāṭa tradition as these show close agreement with the plastic representation of South Indian texts. The cult of Sadāśiva was very popular in South India[1].

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[1] See Upendra Thakur, " A Note on the Pancobh Copper-plate of Saṁgrāmagupta " in *IHQ*, xxxiii, pp. 288-94.

[2] R. K. Chaudhary, " Some recent discoveries in North Bihar " in *JBRS*, XLIII, p. 376.

The worship of Śakti was no less popular. She was supposed to give *siddhis* only but Lord Śiva could award *mukti* or salvation. Some of Mithilā's greatest saints and *upāsakas* have been associated with *Śakti*, for instance, Devāditya, Vardhamāna, Madana Upādhyāya and a host of Tāntrikas. The very first verse taught to a child was in praise of Śakti, *i.e.*, the popularity of *Aripaṇa* or *Alipana* or the painted *yantras* on the ground. Moreover, the *Śābara* rites of Mithilā's women, the sensuous character of the people; *pāga* or their Tāntric headdress, the wide-spread worship of earthen images of Durgā; the *Mātṛkā Pūjā* and the prevalence of *dīkṣā* ( *iṣṭamantragrahaṇa* ) etc. strongly point to the great importance and ineffaceable impact of Śakti in Maithila religious life. The impact was so great that it often found mention in epigraphic records. The Khojapur Durgā Image inscription[2] found in the village of Khojapur in the district of Darbhanga may be cited as a point in instance. In this connection another point of interest is the establishment of the shrine of *Tulajāmātā* or *Tālejumā*, a Śakti Goddess held in high esteem by the Newārs of Nepal—who later became the titular deity of the Malla ( Newār ) dynasty of Kāntipura ( Kathmandu ) in the seventeenth century. The goddess was equally the especially worshipped deity of the Maithila ( Karṇāṭa ) dynasty started by Harisiṁha at Simrāon ( c. 1326 A. D. ). Moreover, the *Ambā Bhavānī* of Tulajāpura in the former Hyderabad State is one of the most important Śākta shrines in the Deccan. The institution of Deccan Brāhmaṇas ( *Mahārāṣṭrīyas* ) as priests in charge of Paśupatinātha was probably a direct result of the Karṇāṭa connection[3]. All these were a direct legacy of Tāntricism which we have discussed in detail elsewhere in this chapter.

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[1] *Ibid*, 370.

[2] *JBRS*, xxxvii, pts. iii-iv, pp. 10-13.

[3] S. K. Chatterji, *JRASB* ( *Kirātajanakṛti* ), xvi, pt. ii, p. 186.

The proximity of the Śālagrāmī river, the observance of all principal Vaiṣṇava fasts and festivals and the immense popularity of *Bhāgavata*, *Harivaṁśa* and *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇas* prove the great influence excercised by Vaiṣṇava worship on the Maithila mind. The long and rich tradition of Maithilī love-poetry that found iis greatest exponent in Vidyāpati is proudly associated with the great Vaiṣṇava literature. Śiva and Śakti were, however, predominant devotional mainsprings of the Maithila mind, which is further evidenced by the existence of a large number of temples of Śiva, Durgā or Śakti, Rāma and Sītā, Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu scattered all over Tirhut, architecturally known as the Tirhut type of temples[1].

Vaiṣṇavism seems to have been a prominent feature much earlier and specially in the Pāla period. The discovery of a large number of Viṣṇu images from Bengal and Bihar bears testimony to the fact. Recently in Birpur ( North Bihar ) three images of Viṣṇu, one of Narasiṁha, one of Varāha ( incarnation of Viṣṇu ) at Jayamaṅglāgarh, yet another of Vārāha in black stone at Baherā and one of Viṣṇu at Naulāgarh[2] are very important as they clearly point to the widespread popularity and influence of Vaiṣṇavism in Mithilā. The development of this system had a hand in the growth of the *avatāra* theory and the Pālas were aware of it. Though the systematisation of the theory of *avatāra* took place in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the Pāla inscriptions refer to several *avatāras* like Vārāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana and Paraśurāma. Jayadeva mentions ten *avatāras*. Thus, the Pāla records speak of both the systems which prevailed in Eastern India in those days[3].

**The Sun Cult :**

Besides these three important cults, worship of the Sun cult also seems to have been popular as is clear from the Bhavāditya temple inscription of Narasiṁhadeva of the

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[1] For details regarding these temples, see *HM*, pp. 384-86.

[2] R. K. Chaudhary, *op. cit.*, pp. 375-76, 369.

[3] *Ibid.* 376.

Oinavāra dynasty in Kandahā[1]. It is inscribed on stone doorframes of a temple dedicated to a sun-image called Bhavāditya. We have yet another rare Sūrya image from Barauni ( North Bihar ), and a few Sūrya images found in Bihar. These images are remarkable in various ways. The body is carefully modelled with considerable regard to realism and the same commendations may be bestowed on the attendants. The decorative frame work is carefully treated and the whole composition produces an imposing and a very pleasing effect. The mechanical execution is perfect and the design is more restrained. The prominent *Kīrtimukhas* convey supreme reality. We know that *Kīrtimukha* was very frequent in the Gupta age not only in images but also in temples. The *Kīrtimukha* tradition continued in the later period and it was one of the prominent features of the Eastern School of mediaeval sculpture[2]. Another peculiarity of the image is that it is decidedly of the period when the foreign influence was on the wane but had not completely disappeared. The two legs are booted and as such the foreign influence on this image is perceptible. The booted Sūrya is a peculiarity of the Gupta period and, therefore, the present image can be tentatively assigned to the later Gupta period. In other words, the Sun cult in Mithilā and other parts of Bihar was a popular cult in the Gupta times and after.

Thus the Mithilā inscriptions—the Simrāon inscriptions of Nānyadeva, the Andhrā Ṭhārhī inscription of Śrīdharadāsa ( referring to the worship of Viṣṇu ); another inscription in the same place and also at Śrīnagara in the Madhipura Sub-Division of Saharasā district referring to Śaivism; the Bheet Bhagavanpur inscription of Malladeva; the Matiāhi stone inscription referring to Viṣṇu worship; the Kandahā inscription of Narasiṁhadeva referring to Sun worship; the Tilakeśvara temple inscription (also known as the Hāvīḍīha inscription of Karmāditya) recording the erection of an image of Haihaṭṭa Devī; the Bhāgirathapura inscription of Kaṁśanārāyaṇa recording installation of a temple, a few bricks of which also bear the specimens of some Tāntrika *Cakras*; the Barantapura Caṇḍīsthāna inscription; the Khojapur Durgā image inscription; the Madhuravāṇīśvara temple inscriptions, the Videśvara temple inscriptions and a few others[1], though not politically important, throw considerable light on the social and religious life of the people. On the basis of the inscriptions and also from the discoveries of the different Hindu gods and goddesses in large numbers in practically all the parts of Mithilā as well as a thousand temples at *Mukuṭika Grāma* in Kalaśapota of the Kakṣa Viṣaya in Tirhut during the Pāla period, it can reasonably be inferred that Śiva, Viṣṇu and Śakti and Sun were widely worshipped in Mithilā[2].

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[1] *JBRS*, XX; *HM*, p. 373; R. K. Chaudhary, *Inscriptions of Bihar*, Intro. 20.

[2] For details, see R. K. Chaudhary, " A Rare Sūrya Image from Barauni" in *Journal of the Bihar University*, vol. iv. No. 1, pp. 34–38.

Besides the above, we have also mention of a different religious sect. i.e., the *Tapasī*[3]. They have been stigmatised as *mandajātīya* (low-caste). They were probably different from the adherents of Śiva, Śakti and Viṣṇu, or they were so called as they lived by begging because of their gruelling poverty[4].

**Islam :**

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries this predominantly Brāhmaṇical country faced the inroad of a new religion *i.e.*, Islam, which the conquering Muslims had brought along with them. The Muhammadans, no doubt, conquered Tirhut, but they did not colonise it, and the tide

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1. For the texts of the above inscriptions see, R. K. Chaudhary, *Inscriptions of Bihar*, pp. 123-38.
2. For other details regarding these cults, see R. K. Chaudhary, *JBRS*, XLIII, 365-83 and B. Upādhyāya, *A Study of Ancient Indian Inscriptions*, Intro. ch. vii.
3. *VR*, p. 1.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 1-2.

of conquest passed over the land without shaking the firm root which Hinduism had struck in the minds of the people. Islam as such could never hold a strong position in Tirhut, and the country has always retained its pronounced Hinduism. The legal writers and religious preachers of Mithilā asserted themselves and for long resisted its onrush. But in course of time, like rest of India, they also appear to have made minor adjustments in their outlook for, there are several features even now which show a complete fusion of Hindus and Muslims. The large number of Persian and Arabic words used by the Maithilas, the adoption of Maithilī by majority of the Muslims in Mithilā; the deliverance of judgements in the courts of Mithilā in strict accordance with traditional Hindu manner till as late as the eighteenth century A. D.; the respect of Maithilas for Muslim festivals ( e. g., *Taziā-Dāhā* as the Maithilas call it) and the Muslims' reverence for Hindu festivals, the adoption of Fasli era ( started by Akbar ) as the national Maithila era, the devotional songs sung in praise of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa both by Hindu and Muslim saints, the impact of Sufism; the incorporation of *Iman* and *Firadausī rāgas* by the celebrated Maithila musician Locana in his *Rāgataraṅgiṇī* etc. in the following century are some of the examples of this gradual fusion[1].

**Tāntrika Religion :**

Hinduism during the mediaeval period, as in modern times, was largely Tāntric. The Tantra was then, as now, the great Mantra and Sādhana Sāstra ( Scripture ) and the main source of some of the most fundamental concepts still prevalent such as worship, image, initiation, *Yoga*, the importance of *Guru* and so forth[2]. Haṭhayoga, and the various kinds of spiritual training form the greater part of the Hindu ritual which is known as *Sādhana*. As a matter of fact, Hinduism–both esoteric and exoteric—is, to all intents and purposes, largely Tāntric[3]. Generally speaking, the Tantras may rightly be termed as "so many encyclopædias of the knowledge of their time". They practically deal with all matters of "common belief and interest from the doctrine of the origin of the world to the laws which govern kings and the societies .... medicine and science generally. The Tantra is ..... the repository of esoteric belief and practices, particularly those relating to *yoga* and *mantra-tattva*"[1]. In them we find the description of the Supreme Being, the creation and the destruction of the Universe, the classification of creatures, the origin and worship of the gods, the heavenly bodies, different world and hells, man and woman, *cakra* ( centre of the human body ), dharma, *āśramas* and the sacraments, mantra, *yantra* ( magic diagram on which to worship ), various forms of spiritual training, *japa*, *vrata*, worship ( internal and external ), medicine, science and many other things.

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[1] For details, see *HM*, pp. 373-75.

[2] Avalon, *Principles of Tantra* ( *Tantra-tattva* ), Pref. pp. 1 ff.

[3] *Ibid*, Intro. p. 19.

It has been argued that the Tantras are a recent Śāstra and are largely creation of the people of Eastern India which is supposed to be its stronghold. The antiquity of the Tantra has, however, been proved beyond doubt to be as ancient as the Śruti itself[2]. In fact, not only in Eastern India, but throughout the whole of India the upper classes of Hindu communinty are governed by the Tāntric religion as far as initiation ( *dīkṣā* ) is concerned. There are Śāktas, Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas all over the country. The Śāktas are initiated by the Śakti-mantra, the Vaiṣṇavas by the Viṣṇu-mantra and the Śaivas by the Śiva-mantra. All these mantras are the exclusive properties of the Tantra. Like Mithilā, Madras, Bengal, Bombay, Kāśı ( Banaras ), Kashmir, Assam and other such notable places of India have Sāktas, Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas in a large number following the Tāntric system. It is, therefore, absurd to argue that this system is the exclusive creation of the people of Eastern India only. Sādhakas have appeared on the scene almost everywhere, and the Maithila

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1. Bhattacharya, *Mātṛkābheda Tantram*, Intro. p. 3; Avalon, *op. cit.* Intro. pp. 49-50.
2. Bhattacharya, Intro. pp. 7 ff; Avalon, Intro. pp. 58 ff; D. N. Bose, *Tantras : Their Philosophy and Occult Secrets*, pp. 2 ff.

Sādhakas and Paṇḍitas, like those of Bengal and other places, have "only prepared compendia and developed the practical side of it to a considerable extent" for the benefit of humanity at large[1].

The theory that Tantra has come out of the Mahāyāna doctrine of the Buddhists[2] who worship Tārā, Vajrayoginī, Kṣetrapāla and use *mantra*, *bīja*, and *japa*, is faulty, hardly supported by any corroborating evidence. There is, no doubt, a similarity of doctrines and practices in the two systems but this hardly justifies the view that one has been borrowed from the other. Scholars are generally unanimous on this point that the Cīna-Tantra is the originator of the worship of Tārā[3] and that this Tantra existed in India much earlier than the time when Mahāyāna Buddhism made its appearance. Apart from the insignificant minor similarities here and there, there is a very great dissimilarity *viz.*, the animal sacrifice. It is a well-known fact that in *Pañcatattva-sādhana*, the Tāntrikas lay much stress on the animal-sacrifice while the Buddhists hold quite an opposite view[4].

It is interesting to note that the Śakti devatā ( the mother goddess ) is worshipped and reverenced and the Śakti-pīṭhas ( the seat of mother goddess ) are established in almost all parts of India: Kāmākhyā is worshipped at Kāmarūpa; Vindhyavāsinī on the Vindhya hills; Yogamāyā and Pūrṇamāsī at Vṛndāvana; Annapūrṇā, Saṁkaṭa, Tripurabhairavī, sixty-four Yoginīs, Kālabhairavī, Durgā, Śītalā, Maṅgalā and Devīs at Kāśī; Guhyeśvarī in Nepal, Gāyatrī and Sāvitrī in Rajputana, Lalitā at Prayāga; Ugratārā in Mithilā ( Tirhut ); Jayakālī in Calcutta; Jvālāmukhī[5] and Chinnamastā in and near Jālandhar; Kṣīrabhavānī near Kashmir and other Devīs in almost all parts of India. Vimalā, Sarasvatī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Kālī and Lakṣmī are worshipped and paid obeisance to, in Utkala, the seat of Lord Jagannātha[1]. To say that Raghunandana Bhaṭṭācārya of Bengal was the first to prescribe for the worship of Durgā, as provided for in the Tantra, would be quite wrong and misleading for we know that previous to him many other thinkers in Mithilā and Bengal and elsewhere had done so. Vidyāpati, Śrīdatta, Harinātha Upādhyāya. Vidyādhara, Ratnākara, Bhojadeva, Jīmūtavāhana, Halāyudha, Vācaspati Miśra, Madhavācārya and even Śaṁkarācārya had admitted the authority of the Tantra while explaining philosophical doctrines. Vācaspati Miśra, the celebrated Maithila thinker and commentator on the six Darśanas, has in his commentary on the *Patañjali Darśana*, recommended Dhyāna of Devatās as prescribed in the Tantra[2]. Moreover, many well-known books written in Mithilā and elsewhere, before the age of Raghunandana, contain provisions for Durgā-Pūjā, such as the *Durgā-Bhakti-Taraṅgiṇī*, *Saṁvatsarapradīpa*, *Kālakaumudī*, *Jyotiṣārṇava*, *Smṛti-sāgara*, *Kalpa-taru*, *Kṛtya-mahārṇava*, *Kṛtya-ratnākara*, *Kṛtya-tattvārṇava*, *Durgābhakti-prakāśa*, *Kāla-nirṇaya*, *Pūjā-ratnākara*, and others pertaining to the worship of Durgā and Kālī[3].

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[1] Bhattacharya, p. 7; Avalon, pp. 59 ff.

[2] cf. S. B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 13 ff.

[3] Tārā is also referred to in the *Ṛgveda*.

[4] Bhattacharya, p. 8; Avolon, pp. 60 ff.

[5] Jvālāmukhī, Caṇḍī, Tārā, Durgā, etc. are also worshipped in Mithilā at different places.

The Bengali practice of worshipping earthen images of Durgā and Kālī with great pomp and ceremony is followed in Mithilā in all details. It is true that this practice does not receive the same favour, as in Mithilā and Bengal, in other parts of India but it is also true that She is everywhere worshipped in *ghaṭas* ( earthen jars ). Shrines containing her images are reverentially visited, nine-day *vratas* performed, fasts duly observed and the sacred *Caṇḍī* read on the Mahāṣṭamī day. Even now women-folk bathe in the rivers or tanks early every morning for the first nine days of the bright fortnight of the month of Āśvina and worship the small images of the Devī, made ofclay, with all devotion. All these undoubtedly show that this practice of worshipping the Devī has been followed from times immemorial without any break.

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[1] For further details, see Avalon, pp. 63-64.

[2] cf. Avalon, p. 67.

[3] For other details, see *Ibid*, pp. 65 ff.

The most peculiar characteristic of this religion is that women and Śūdras are not at all prohibited from practising the *Sādhana.* The *Rudrayāmala* says that a woman may also be a *Guru* who is *kulīna* (practising *kulācāra*), of auspicious appearance, fair-faced and lotus-eyed, endowed with intellect, calmness of mind, proficient in *mantras* and in their meanings, ever engaged in *japa* and devoted to the worship of her *Iṣṭadevatā*[1]. The *Gautamīya Tantra* declares that the people of all castes, irrespective of sex, may receive its *mantras*[2]. In the *Cakra* there is no caste at all, even the lowest Caṇḍāla being deemed, whilst therein, higher than Brāhmaṇas. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*[3] says : "That low Kaula who refuses to initiate a Caṇḍāla or a Yavana into the Kaula *dharma,* considering them to be inferior, or a woman out of disrespect for her, goes the downward way. All two-footed beings in this world, from the *vipra* (Brāhmaṇa) to the inferior castes, are competent for Kulācāra." This is no doubt the most revolutionary aspect of this religion which in the course of centuries attracted millions of followers to its fold.

Another great factor that contributed to its tremendous growth and popularity is that in the Tantras, the duties of each of the castes as well as those of the king are not prescribed much differently from Manu, the great law-giver. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* speaks very highly of the family-life. It rigorously prescribes that one should never be allowed to take to ascetic life who has children, wife or such like near relations to maintain[4]. We have in the ninth chapter of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (*Saṁskāras*) "sacraments from conception until marriage", entirely in consonance with Brāhmaṇic texts. In the tenth chapter we have the direction for the disposal and the cult of the dead ( *Śrāddha* ). "A peculiarity of the Śāktas in connection with marriage consists in the fact that side by side with the Brahma marriage for which the Brāhmaṇic prescriptions are valid, there is also a Śaiva marriage, that is, a kind of marriage for a limited period which is only permitted to the members of the circle ( *cakra* ) of the initiates. But children out of such marriage are not legitimate and do not inherit[1]". Thus, the Brāhmaṇic law also applies to the Śāktas, and as such the section concerning civil and criminal law in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* substantially agrees with Manu.

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[1] Cf. "*Sarva varṇādhikārāṣca nārīnāṁ yogyameva ca*".

[2] Chap. xiv, vs. 187 & 184.

[3] Avalon, pp. 807-08 ff.

[4] Cf. Shamṣastry, *Kauṭilya*, p. 48.

History, as hitherto read and understood, speaks of the Brāhmaṇas of the pre-Buddhistic age, their growing alienation from the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* or the Upaniṣadic wisdom, their impotency to save the orthodox Vedic communities from the encroachments of the non-Vedic hoards and races, their ever-deepening religious formalism and social exclusiveness[2]. "But this history is silent on the marvellous feats which the Upaniṣadic sects of anchorites, were silently performing on the outskirts of the strictly Vedic community, with the object of aryanising the new India that was arising over the ashes of the Kurukṣetra conflagration"[3]. This new India was not strictly Vedic "like India of the by-gone ages, for it could not claim the religious ministrations of the orthodox Vedic Brāhmaṇas"[4]. This spiritual process consisted in absorbing communities of men into the fold of Vedic religion. The prevalent Vedic ritualism of the days was too powerless to face these new communities springing up all over the country. From the *Karmakāṇḍa* we have, therefore, to turn to the only other factor, *Jñānakāṇḍa* in the Vedic religion which finds elaborate representation in the Upaniṣads. Besides the earlier ritualism of *yajñas* being philosophised upon the earlier Upaniṣads, we find that the foundation for a new elaborate ritualism was fully laid in many of the later Upaniṣads. The philosophy of *Pañcaupāsanā* ( fivefold worship viz. the worship of Śiva, Devī, Sun, Ganeśa and Viṣṇu ) was developed out of the mystery of Praṇava ( '*OM*' ), of which some features are also to be clearly seen in the Brāhmaṇas[1]. As a matter of fact such *upakaraṇas* of Tāntric worship as grass, leaves, water etc. seem to have been adopted from the Vedic worship along with their appropriate incantations. This may thus be regarded as the earliest configuration which Tantricism had on the eve of "these silent but mighty social upheavals through which the Aryanisation of vast and increasing multitudes of new races proceeded in pre-Buddhistic India, and which had their culmination in the eventful centuries of the Buddhistic *coup-de-grace*"[2].

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[1] Avalon, 117. It is, however, incorrect to call them illegitimate children. On the other hand, off-springs of a Brahma-marriage are preferential inheritors.

[2] Avalon, 558.

[3] *Ibid.*, 558.

[4] Cf. the discourse about the conception of Śiva.

The great problem to be tackled was the aryanisation of this new India that was rising and surging furiously from every side against the fast-dwindling centres of the old Vedic orthodoxy struggling hard for its existence. The religious movements of the Bhāgavatas, Śāktas, Sauras, Śaivas, Gaṇapatyas, Jainas and Buddhists absorbed many of the non-Aryan races and cast their life in the mould of the Vedic spiritual ideal which largely minimised the gulf existing between them and the Vedic orthodoxy, ending in their gradual amalgamation in the course of a few centuries. Thus, the pre-Buddhistic phase of Tāntric worship is a fact to be reckoned with in the early history of India much before the appearance of the Buddha. Its foundation was so widely and firmly established that, notwithstanding the ceaseless efforts, Buddhism could not dislodge it, but was in turn itself swallowed up by this Tāntric worship within a short span of few centuries. This wonderfully transformed Buddhism soon appeared on the arena in its new attractive garb as the Mahāyāna[3].

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[1] *Ibid.*, 558.

[2] *Ibid.*, 554.

[3] For other details, see *Ibid.*, 556 ff.

The Tantra is wrongly stigmatised as a libidinous phallic necromancy. This is all due to the excesses of some misguided Vāmamārgins or Vāmācarīs. The real Tāntrika is neither a cynic nor a hedonist. He is rather an eudemonist than a slave to passions. The much-ridiculed five *M's* ( *makāras* ) are only esoteric symbologies : Wine ( *Madya* ) is the lunar ambrosia flowing from the Soma Cakra; Woman is the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti sleeping in the lower plexus ( *Mūlādhāra* ) ; *Matsya* ( fish ) is the annihilation of " I " and "mine"; *Māṁsa* ( meat ) is the surrender of the limited human to the unlimited divine; *Mudrā* ( gesture ) is cessation from evils and *Maithuna* ( sexual union ) is the union of the Śakti with the Śiva in man. The Tantras do not consider woman to be an object of pleasure. She is described as Parāśakti and deified and adored. The Tantra is the only science that has explored the divine regions of man and woman. It is the only method that enables man to rise Phoenix-like from the dead ashes of the sexual passion. It analyses and scrutinises every atom of the human synthesis and thereby awakens the latent dynamism in all the places of consciousness[1].

The worship of Śakti was predominant in Mithila and Bengal. Like the worship of Śiva, the worship of Śakti was equally wide-spread. There is, however, a great difference in that there is a marked paucity of legends and stories recording any attainment of the Siddhis by the worshippers of the Lord Śiva whereas the stories regarding Sākta devotees attaining miraculous powers are numerous in Mithilā. This is probably because Śakti was supposed to give these *Siddhis* only, but the god who could award mukti or salvation was Lord Śiva, which was certainly a higher thing. Some of the greatest saints and *upāsakas* of Mithilā, such as Devāditya, Vardhamāna, Madana Upādhyāya,

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[1] *Ibid.*, For other details, see *Ibid.*, xv-xix, 1-14; 15-117; Avalon, *The Principles of Tantra*, 10-105, 539-725. For the two different sects *Vāmamārga* and *Dakṣiṇamārga*, see Woodroffe, *Śakti and Śākta*, 57, 71, 153-54 etc.

Gokulanātha Upādhyāya, Mahārāja Rameśvara Siṁha, Gaṇanātha Upādhyāya, Lakṣmīnātha Gosāin and a host of others, were associated with Śakti. Every house-hold has a *Gosāuni* ( Śakti goddess ). There are still many pīṭhas and centres of Tāntricism where Sādhakas from different parts of the country come to practise Sādhana. We have already noted above that the first verse taught to a child is in praise of Śakti. The popularity of Aripaṇa or Alipana ( painted Yantras on the ground ); the names of Maithilas such as Tantradhārī, Tantranātha, Khaḍgadhārī, Tārācaraṇa, Ādyācaraṇa etc., the *Śābara* rites of Mithilā women ; the vogue of fish and meat eating ; *Pāda* or the Tāntric head-dress; the offering of sweet-cooked rice in milk and the feeding of Kumārīs ( virgins ) known as *Pātari ceremony* on all auspicious occasions; the wide-spread public worship of the earthen images of Durgā in Daśaharā or Vijayādaśamī; the worship of the *Liṅgam* ( a veritable Tāntric symbol ); the Mātṛkā Pūjā, the performance of Nainā-Yogina and the prevalence of Dīkṣā—all these briefly point to the great importance of the Śakti cult in the life of the Maithilas in general. But all told, the fact remains that the glory and honour that the Tantras had, and received, in the time of those great Sādhakas and Māhārājas Kṛṣṇacandra and Śivacandra of Bengal and Lakṣmīśvara Siṁha and Rameśvara Siṁha of Mithilā no longer exist. This is the reason why the Tāntric Sādhakas of Bengal and Mithila are not so well-known at present.

As regards the origin of Maithila Tāntricism it is generally believed that the village of Mahisī ( Bangāon-Mahisī ) in the district of Saharsā, associated with the celebrated name of Maṇḍana Miśra and well known to the students of Indian history for the remarkable discovery of the Bangāon copper-plate of Vigrahapāla III of the Pāla dynasty, was the birth-place of this cult where flourished innumerable Sādhakas and devotees in the past. It is undoubtedly one of the most important archaeological sites of Bihar which hitherto remains unexplored and completely ignored by the archaeologists.

It is situated on the bank of the river Dhemurā, a tributary of Kośī, the river of sorrow, which has relentlessly ravaged the entire area.

Besides the images of Tārā, Nīlasarasvatī, Ekajalā, Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa, Tripurāsundari, Śītalā, Tārānātha and other gods and goddesses kept in a brick temple and two small thatched huts, there are there at present six *kuṇḍas*, viz., Tārākuṇḍa, Tārākañcukīkuṇḍa, Vaśiṣṭhakuṇḍa, Gautamakuṇḍa, Akṣobhyakuṇḍa and Mānasarovarakuṇḍa. These *kuṇḍas* have been described in the famous Tāntric work, *Cīnācāratantra*[1].

The tradition goes that Dakṣa performed a sacrifice in which neither Śiva nor Pārvatī was invited. Hearing this Satī (Pārvatī) went to her father's place of her own accord where she was so much shocked at the insult of her husband (Śiva) by her father (Dakṣa) that she jumped into the *Yajñakuṇḍa*. When Śiva came to know of the great tragedy, he atonce rushed down to the place and lifted the dead body of Satī over his shoulders. He was very much irritated and infuriated which set Viṣṇu thinking. In order to prevent Śiva, Viṣṇu, thereupon, started with his *cukra* and began to cut down the parts of the dead body. The eyes of Satī fell in Mahisī and since then it turned into a very great centre of Tāntric worship in Mithilā.

According to another tradition, Vaśiṣṭha brought Śakti from China and placed her at Mahisī which was then the den of asuras. The local tradition, however, says that it was the capital of the *asura* king, Mahiṣāsura, and hence its present name. Rānī Padmāvatī, queen of Mahārāja Narendra Siṁha of the Khaṇḍavalā[1] dynasty of Mithilā ( or the Darbhanga Raj ) got the present temple constructed there as she herself hailed from Mahisī.

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[1] The book is now preserved in the Raj Library, Darbhanga. We have the following details about these *kuṇḍas*. :–

“वशिष्टकुण्डं पापघ्नं, कुण्डं च गौतमाभिधां
अक्षोभ्यकुडं सफलं, चैतज्जाभ्यदिशिस्मित ।
तत समीपे महेशाजि सरोमानस संज्ञकम्
माहिष्मत्याश्च महात्मश्रृणु साध्वि वरानने
वशिष्टं समानिता तारणीं चीन देशतः ।
नारिम्येन जटाशक्ति तथा नील सरस्वती
अक्षोभ्य गरुणायुक्ता स्थापिता यत्र सुन्दरी ॥”

Thus Mithilā since time immemorial has been a celebrated centre of Tāntric cult where flocked Sādhakas and devotees from all parts of the country to receive proper initiation in the remarkable cult. It has been rightly held that "the *Śakti* cult was revealed in the Gauḍa, popularised by the Maithilas, here and there, prevails in Mahārāṣṭra and has disappeared in Gujerāt[2]". We have the following description of Durgā in the *Devīmahātmya* in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* : "The energy of Śiva was on her face, Yama's power in her hair, in her arms lay Viṣṇu's strength, her breasts were like unto the moon, her waist had the vigour of Indra, and her legs and thighs, the speed of Varuṇa". The goddess *Nīlasarasvatī* of Mahisī may be identified with the Tāntric deity, *Mahānīlasarasvatī*, to whom we have a veiled reference in an inscription of Nayapāla found at Gaya[3].

The *Mithilāmāhātmya* of the *Bṛhadviṣṇu Purāṇa* while describing Mahisī refers to its association with Tāntricism as being very old. We read in the *Śaktipīṭhas*[4] : *Trisotāyāṁ vāmapādo bhrāmarī bhairaveśvaraḥ*. In a footnote in the above work, D. C. Sircar suggests : "A. M. suggests another reading : *Tirotayāṁ vāma pādaśvāmarī bhairavo-ḍamaraḥ*, which refers to Tirhut—*Mithilāyāṁ vāmadeśe Ugradevī mandodarī*[5]. Mahisī's Tārā is known as Ugratārā. Mahisī is also said to be a *Siddhapīṭha*. The *Kubjikātantra* enumerates Māhiṣmatī as one of the *Siddhapīṭhas* :

"कमला विमला चैव तथा माहिष्मती पुरी
वाराही त्रिपुरा चैव वाग्मती नीलवाहिनी"

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1. For detailed description of this dynasty, see my forthcoming book, *History of Mithilā*, Vol. 11, chap. III.
2. R. P. Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races*.
3. R. K. Chaudhary, *Inscriptions of Bihar*, 74 : "उरुनीलपद्मा।"
4. D. C. Sircar, *Śaktipīṭhas*, 47.
5. *Ibid.*, 65.

At Kandāhā, one inscription of Narasiṁhadeva of the Kaṛṇāṭa dynasty[1] was found, and three miles east of Kandāhā there is a temple of Bāṇeśvara Mahādeva in Devanagopāla. Tradition attributes this liṅga to Bāṇāsura. What is, however, very important in this connection is that Tārā, Bhavāditya and Bāṇeśvara are established on triangular point ( *trikoṇa-yantra* ) which definitely indicates the importance of the region of Mahisī as an important centre of Tāntricism[2]. In other words, the origin of Maithila Tāntricism may safely be traced to this place[3].

Jayamaṅgalāgarh is yet another important seat of Tāntric cult in Mithilā. It is regarded as one of the important *Pīṭhas* of India. We do not exactly know as to when and how this *Pīṭha* came to be established there, but the fact remains that Goddess Jayamaṅgalā, a Tāntric deity ( after which the place is said to have been named ) is mentioned by almost all the Maithila scholars in their works[4]. This goddess also finds mention in the *Mithilāmāhātmya*, *Brahmavaivartta Purāṇa*, *Devībhāgavatam* and *Prāṇatoṣinī*. It is generally believed that Lord Śiva, after having killed Tripura *rākṣasa*, established this *pīṭha* here[5].

According to a Siamese Buddhist traveller, Jayamaṅgalāgarh was a sacred Buddhist place in ancient times but later became the centre of Tāntric Buddhism. Even to-day it is regarded as an important centre of Tāntric cut and Sādhakas come here from far-off places like Bengal and Nepal. It seems probable and this place became a renowned

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1. See my book, *History of Mithilā*, chap. v.
2. R. K. Chaudhary in *JBRS*. XLIII. 380-83.
3. Tradition is preserved in the following folk-song :

   "भवा भवादिता देवना महेश
   वनगाँ ( वनगांव ) दुर्गा मिटे कलेश
   वलोरे मधुरी वाणी दूर्गा" ( *Ibid*. 383 ).
4. Cf. P. Jhā, *Mithilā - tattva - vimarśa*; Das, *Mithilā Darpaṇa*, etc.
5. *G. D. College Bulletin Series*, No. 2 ( ed. R. K. Chaudhary ), pp. 13-14.

centre of Śakti cult after the Pāla period. Tāntric cult in later times, as we know, was a continuation of Tāntric Buddhism, and the establishment of *Pīṭha* was a natural development of the propagation of the cult[1].

Besides the above important centres, there were many other centres of Tāntric cult scattered all over Mithilā, some of which flourished till recently. That the cult was very popular with the Maithilas is evidenced by the enormous volume of literature on Tantra composed by celebrated Maithila scholars like Vācaspati Miśra ( I ), Prabhākara, Mm. Vidyāpati Ṭhākura ( probably different from the celebrated poet Vidyāpāti )[2], Maṇḍana and others. Vidyāpati, the author of the *Āgamadvaita-nirṇaya*, refers in his work to his own *sampradāya* implying thereby that he belonged to a particular Tāntric school of Mithilā. In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[3], Vidyāpati is described to have been a scion of the family of an āgamabhūṣaṇa who was initiated in the Vīra-cult of Tantra and that he himself attained Siddhi, perhaps in the same Vīra-cult[4]. In the Mithilā *Pañjis* the Tāntrika Siddhas of Mithilā are generally distinguished by the title Gosāī, for instance, Lakṣmīnātha Gosāin and others. The great men of the Ucitī family, of which the above Vidyāpati is said to have been a celebrated scion, have been ignored in the *Pañjis* probably because of the great disfavour with which Vīra-cult has been looked down upon in Mithilā. All the great men who were initiated in the Vīra-cult and followed *vāmācāra* of the Tantra, kept this a secret and never avowed this openly in the society.

In Mithilā, there have been many celebrated families of great Tāntrikas, and Vidyāpati also belonged to one such family which fact the members of that family avowed with great pride. His father Mm. Govinda Ṭhākura, was a great Tāntrika and wrote many works on Tantra which are yet held in great esteem. This was the Ghosauta family belonging to Vatsya gotra, besides the Ucitī family noted above. Govinda Ṭhākura had eight sons, all of whom were renowned scholars, styled as *Mahāmahopādhyāyas* in the *Pañjis*. Besides Vidyāpati ( his second son ) Devanātha was his fifth son who is styled as *Āgamacārya Tarkapañcānana* and who wrote many *Kaumudīs* on Tantra, Mantra, Smṛti, Mīmāṁsā etc. His seventh son Mm. Madhusūdana wrote the many *Kaṇṭakoddhāras* on Nyāya and Smṛti also. Devanātha in his *Mantra-Kaumudī* eulogises his family in very glowing terms and calls his father Govinda, *Sakalatantrasarojasūryaḥ*. This Govinda is the celebrated author of the *Kāvyapradīpa* on the *Kāvya-prakāśa* and *Pūjā-pradīpa*, a work on the Tāntrika mode of worship. They probably flourished in the 15th century A. D.[1].

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[1] For other details, see *Supra*, chap. iv.

[2] For different views see *JGNJRI*, vol. vi, pp. 241-47; viii, 91-99 etc.

[3] Quoted *Ibid.*, vi, 246 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*, vi, 247.

Besides the above, the great Maithila jurist, Caṇḍeśvara has in his *Kṛtyacintāmaṇi* described his grand-father Devāditya as *Mantraprabhāvāhatapratyarthikṣitināyakāndhatamasaḥ* and *cakradvijanāṁ priyaḥ* meaning that "he was possessed of extraordinary powers given to him by the *siddhi* of *mantra* by dint of which he could dispel the blinding darkness caused by the enemy kings" and that "he was favourite of the *dvija* sitting in a *cakra*". This *cakra*, as we know, is a term used for a secret conference of people following the vāmācāra[2]. In other words, Devāditya was an adept in Mantra-Siddhi and was a patron of Tāntrika of the Vīra-cult, if not himself a Vīra. From the above references, it is obvious that some of the great Sādhakas of Mithilā practised *vāmācāra*. while the majority favoured the *Dakṣiṇācāra*.

This reference for, and adoration of, Śakti has immensely influenced the script and literature of the land. Not only there are a large number of Tāntric works written and compiled in Sanskrit, not only there are almost all writers praising

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1. *Ibid.*, viii, 97-98.
2. *Ibid.*, viii. 98-99.

Śakti or the Primal ( *Ādyā* ) Energy, but the very script of Maithilī, called *Mithilākṣara* or *Tirahutā* has developed in accordance with Tāntric Yantras. The history of this peculiar development of the Varṇas has been elaborately dealt with in the *Kāmadhenu Tantra* and the *Varṇoddhāra Tantra*[1]. Let us, for instance, take the formation of the letter ra ( र ). The three lines form the *trikoṇa* and the line inside is a modern development of a *Bindu* which is to be found in mediæval Maithilī inscriptions. The *āñji* ( F ) sign in the beginning of Maithilī alphabet is again due to the Tāntric influence, for it represents the *Kuṇḍalinī* ( *Mūlādhāra* )[2].

Another very important result of this Tāntric predominance over the Maithilas has been the composition of the popular *Gosāuni-ka-Gīta* ( the song of the Goddess Durgā ) in Maithilī literature, without which no auspicious religious ceremony can ever begin in Mithilā. Besides a large number of songs popularly known as *jogs*, there are a great number of documents relating to incantations and charms in Maithilī which, though not fully understood now by the experts of the Mantra-Śāstra, nonetheless, serve their purpose very efficaciously[3].

Thus the influence of the Tāntric practices has been so great upon the life of the Maithilas that all their daily activities are practically dominated and governed by the principles of the Tāntric religion. The *Kaula* and *Daśamahāvidyā* however, gained wide popularity in Mithilā in course of time. The Kaulas became the protagonists of Vāmācāra or Vāmamārga sect and *Daśamahāvidyā*. Kālī, Tārā and Bhubaneśvarī have now prominent place in the life of the Maithilas. Āgama does not necessarily mean " a sacred book appealed to by Vāmācārins " as opposed to Nigama of the followers of Dakṣiṇācāra. Nor is the term Vāmācārin itself a synonym for Kaula, for a person may be the first without being the second.

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[1] Also cf. Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* ( *Varṇamālā* ).

[2] Vide, *Journal of Assam Research Society*, vol. 1, p. 3.

[3] Vide, *JBRS.*, xxxiii, pts. i-ii, pp. 50-52.

In ancient Mithilā Dakṣiṇācāra was more popular and widely practised. It produced great Sādhakas. But in course of time the Maithilas came to be intensely influenced by the Vāmācāra practices. The mode of worship in the two mārgas is quite different. It is true, one who follows the Vāmācāra attains Siddhi soon; but it is very difficult to practice it successfully and as such there is every chance of a fall in this mārga. Vaśiṣṭha and other Sādhakas followed Dakṣiṇācāra and were great devotees of the Goddess Tārā. Great Sādhakas have from time to time appeared on the scene and inspired people to practise this religion. Tāntric Buddhism, as we know, also greatly influenced it with the result that Mithilā came into contact with Mahā Cīna ( great China )[1]. Dakṣiṇācāra was, therefore, ( and is still ) looked upon with high regard. Innumerable Sādhakas in Mithilā followed this path, whose life-history, full of miraculous feats and wonderful achievements, has now passed into legends handed down from generation to generation and is yet an object of popular study and reverence.

Side by side with Dakṣiṇācāra, Vāmācāra and Kaula also gained much popularity and soon gave rise to *Abhicāra-karma*[2] ( black magic, mummery, witch-crafts etc. ) among the low classes and women. This had no doubt a dangerously demoralising effect on the morale of the common people, and it was this Karma that largely contributed to unpopularity of the Tantras in general and the growing hatred for the Sādhakas in particular in Mithilā, Bengal and Assam. Indeed,

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1. Umesha Miśra, *Maithila Saṁskṛti O' Sabhyatā* ( in Maithilī ), pt. II. p. 18.

2. This *Abhicāra-karma* was unfortunately the indirect result of the *Arimardana Homa* or *Nigraha Homa*, i.e., "the object of punishing an enemy" fully dealt with and enumerated in the thirty-first chapter ( *Arimardana Homa* ) of the celebrated work *Tantrarāja-Tantra* ( *The King among Tantras* ) edited by Sir John Woodroffe ( Arthur Avalon ). Verses 3-6 of this chapter speak of certain things which should be known regarding the enemy before a *homa* is begun.

the divine qualities inherent in this sect are very difficult to practise, and, therefore, in the absence of the right interpretations and understanding people took to degrading forms of debauchery under the garb of the Tāntric Sādhana. The result was obvious. The divine Tantras came to be stigmatised as a libidinous phallic necromancy.

The use of *Bhāṅga* ( something like the *Soma-rasa* of the ancient Hindus ) among the Maithilas is the direct result of their association with Vāmācāra. Those who refrained from taking wine, probably took to *Bhāṅga* for intoxication.

Lakṣmīdhara, in his commentary on the thirty-first verse ( *śloka* ) of *Saundarya-Laharī* of Śaṁkarācārya has given the names of sixty-four Tantras, i.e., *Candrakalā*, *Jyotsnāvatī*, *Kalānidhi*, *Kulārṇava*, *Kuleśvarī*, *Bhuvaneśvarī*, *Bārhaspatya* and *Durvāsamata*, in which the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras and even the mixed castes have been given equal rights to perform meditation[1]. The first three are advised to attain Siddhi through Dakṣiṇācāra practices and Śūdras and the mixed castes are required to undergo Sādhana through Vāmācāra. It is due to this liberal attitude that there have been no religious disturbances in Mithilā since hoary past to the present day. One finds Śaivas, Śāktas and Vaiṣṇavas living together in perfect harmony in one and the same family. Whenever fish or meat is prepared in a family, the members, though belonging to different sects, sit together in one row and take their meals ungrudgingly, the only difference being that the Vaiṣṇavas keep away from taking fish or meat. Inspite of their catholic outook and tolerance, wearing *kaṇṭhī* or *Tulasīmāla* ( the garland of Tulasī ), a symbol of Vaiṣṇavism, is not looked upon with favour by the Maithilas. The Brāhmaṇas, however, daily worship the Śālagrāma ( Viṣṇu ) and rub Śrīkhaṇḍacandana and ashes ( *bhasma* ) of Śiva on their forehead, arms, ears and other parts of their body. Side by side with these gods, they worship *Iṣṭadevī*, the symbol of Śakti and also put vermillion marks on their forehead. Durgā Pūjā is celebrated with the same zeal and vigour as Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī or Janmāṣṭamī and Śivarātri[1]. All this has resulted in wonderful blending of different religious sects and perfect harmony among their followers, a feature hardly to be seen elsewhere. Even the most orthodox Brāhmaṇas participate in Muslim religious festivals and also those of the low castes, and vice-versa. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that in Mithilā and Bengal we have the real Indian culture in all its broad aspects, still flourishing, to which the celebrated Tāntric religion has made its unique contributions[2].

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[1] Umesha Miśra, *op. cit.*, 18 ff.

**Philosophy :**

Intermingled with religion is philosophy which is looked upon as the natural outcome of religion. Whether religion leads to philosophy or philosophy to religion, in India the two are inseparable. Upaniṣad or the Vedānta philosophy is the logical outcome of the Sāṁkhya and pushes its conclusions yet further[3]. Its exponent was Kapila, the father of all psychologists. The ancient system taught by him is still the foundation of all accepted systems of philosophy in India which are known as *darśanas*. Kapila denies the existence of God as creator, and *Prakṛti*, according to him, is sufficient to work out all that is good. The Sāṁkhya system does not believe in the unity of all the souls. The Vedānta, however, believes that all individual souls are united in one cosmic being called Brahman. Kapila's theory of "the universal extension of matter unbroken"—one substance changing to another substance called *mahat* which in one state manifests as intelligence and in another state as egoism—is practically the stepping-stone to Vedānta. There is thus no philosophy in the world which is not endebted to Kapila[4].

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1. *Ibid.*
2. For details, see Upendra Thakur, "Development and Growth of Tāntric Religion in Mithilā" in *IHQ*, xxxiv ( Nos. 3-4 ), 1958, pp. 193-204.
3. Vivekananda, *Science and Philosophy of Religion*, p. 11.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

Vedānta means the end of the Veda and as such it recognises its dependence on the Vedas and oneness of religion and philosophy. They are the highest consummation of the Brāhmaṇic religion. They lay stress on knowledge as the means of salvation. *Tarati śokaṁ ātmavit*, i.e., "the knower of Ātman crosses all sorrow"; *brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati* i.e., "the knower of Brahman, indeed becomes Brahman"[1]. The existence is what Kapila calls *Puruṣa* or *Ātman* and the Vedānta *Self*. The whole universe is one. There is only one existence. When it is passing through the forms of time, space and causation, it is called Intelligence, self-consciousness, fine matter, gross matter etc. The whole universe is one which the *advaitists* call *Brahman*. Brahman appearing behind the creation is called God; appearing behind the little universe the miscrocosm is the soul. The very Self or Ātman is therefore, God in man. The liberated soul feels his oneness with God so intensely that he calls himself "the creator of the world—I am the food, I am the foodeater. I am the subject, I am the object ..... I am the centre of the world, of immortal Gods"[2]. There is one individual existence in the universe, ever free and ever blessed and that is what we are"—this is the last conclusion arrived at by the Advaitists.

The general spirit underlying the Upaniṣads may be described as the search for truth in life. "Lead me from the unreal to the real; lead me from darkness to light; lead me from death to immortality"—prays the sage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[3]. "Whence are we born, where do we live and whither do we go?" asks the Upaniṣadic poet, and upon reflection he gets solutions to his queries. He finds that "all we can say about God is negative—it is not this, it is not that". The only possible assertion that the mystic saint makes is when he comes face to face to him: "That art thou—*tat tvam asi*". Ānanda, the Supreme Soul, "creates the world and enters it", so that "the world is full of Him" etc. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* also makes an important addition to the doctrine in the form of the gospel of *karman* ( action ) which determines a man's death, the nature of his next.

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[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.* 11. 2. 2; *Kaṭh. Up.* 11.15, Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii.

[2] *Taitt. Up.* iii; Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*

[3] viii. 12.

The doctrine that Self is yet essentially unknowable through the ordinary venues of knowledge is as old as the Upaniṣads. The puzzle was first started by Yājñavalkya, the great Maithila philosopher of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in his famous dialogues with Maitreyī, his wife and Gārgī[1]. The puzzle has remained engrained in the Vedānta philosophy of a later age and has found in Śaṁkara ( 9th cent. A. D. ) one of its most powerful exponents. In the history of western thought a strikingly similar doctrine has been the upshot of Kant's critical anyalysis of knowledge. The nucleus of Yājñavalkya's *Philosophy of Fictions* is explained in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[2] where he is telling his wife Maitreyī that "it is only where there is an as-it-were duality"; that "one is able to see another, to know another, to smell another, to hear another, but where to the realiser the whole world is Ātman, by what and what could he see, by what and what could he think, by what and what could he hear ?"– these are the three steps which the Vedānta philosopher has taken and "we can not go beyond, because we cannot go beyond unity".

In the history of the great thinkers of the Upaniṣadic period with their distinctive contributions the following names stand out—Mahidāsa Aitreya, Raikva, Sāṇḍilya, Satyakāma Jābāla, Jaivali, Uddālaka, Śvetaketu, Bhāradvāja, Gargyāyana, Pratardana, Bālāki, Ajātaśatru, Varuṇa, Yājñavalkya, Gārgī, Maitreyī, Janaka Vaideha ( Kṛti Janaka ), Śaibya Satyakāma, Kausalya Āśvalāyana, Bhārgava Vaidarbhi and Kabandhi Kātyāyana.

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[1] *Bṛh. Up.* iv, 5.1. Also see R. D. Ranade's article in *Jha Com. Vol.* p. 269.

[2] *Ibid.*

**Yājñavalkya :**

The name of Yājñavalkya, the first reputed author of the *White Yajurveda*, a prominent authority on the rituals in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, and on philosophy of *Brahma* and *Ātman* first propounded in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, is one of the most illustrious among Vedic sages. We have numerous references to this promulgator of the *White Yajurveda* in our ancient literature. From the *Mahābhārata*[1] we learn that there was a quarrel between Vaiśampāyana and his pupil Yājñavalkya[2] with the result that the latter worshipped the Sun and received the revelation of the *White Yajurveda*, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and etc. We have references to this interesting rupture between the great teacher and the great taught in almost all the *Purāṇas*[3] though they somewhat differ from the account contained in the *Mahābhārata*. But they all agree on this point that there were strained relations between the two.

In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* we have several allusions to the dialogues between Yājñavalkya and Janaka Vaideha ( Kṛti Janaka ) on Agnihotra[4]. It is again at the end of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that we learn that Yājñavalkya promulgated the bright Yajus formulae from the Sun[5]. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[6] he appears as a very great philosopher who taught the doctrines of *Brahma* and immortality to Maitreyī, his philosopher-wife. Further, we are told that he carried away one thousand cows, set apart by Kṛti Janaka, the great philosopher-king of Mithilā for the most learned Brāhmaṇa[7]. He also taught Janaka the knowledge of the destiny of the soul after it is released from the bonds of flesh and worldy affections[1]. All these evidences, when read together, clearly show that in the history of the great thinkers of the Vedic period with their distinctive contributions, the name of Yājñavalkya stands most pre-eminent whose doctrines constitute the very backbone of Indian philosophy.

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[1] *Śānti-Parva*, chap. 312.

[2] For other details, see *HM*, 39-46.

[3] *Viṣṇu*. 3.5; *Bhāgavata*, xii, 6.61-74 etc.

[4] *Śat. Brā.* xi. 6.2; *SBE.* Vol. 44, p. 46.

[5] *Śat. Brā.* xiv. 9.4.33 : "आदित्यानीमानि शुक्लानि यंजूषि वाजसनेयेन याज्ञवल्क्येनाख्यायन्ते"

[6] II, 4; IV. 5. For other details see *HM*. 99–101.

[7] *Bṛh. Up.* III, 1. 1–2.

This Yājñavalkya is also credited with having composed the *Smṛti*, renowned as *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti.* There is, however, a great controversy regarding the authorship of this work. In the *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti*[2] itself the author claims the authorship of the *Āraṇyaka* that he received from the Sun and *Yogaśāstra* composed by him[3].

This celebrated code of law is only second in importance to that of Manu's. Its well-known commentary, *Mitākṣarā* is the leading authority of the Mithilā school. While Manu is said to have legislated mainly for Brahmarṣideśa, Yājñavalkya is no doubt associated with Mithilā, the erstwhile celebrated seat of learning and philosophy. The *Smṛti* is comparatively modern in respect of its style and doctrines, and as such it is difficult to accept that he was the author of this work. P. V. Kane has rightly observed that "from the style and doctrines of the *Smṛti* it is impossible to believe that it was the work of the same hand that gave to the world the *Upaniṣad* containing the boldest philosophical speculation couched in the simplest yet the most effective language[4]." That the same man was the author of the *Smṛti* and the *Āraṇyaka* is not admitted without reservation even by the orthodox Indian opinion, inspite of the fact that "the *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti* is much more closely connected with *White Yajurveda* and the literature particularly belonging to it than with any other

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1. Also cf. Pāṇini, III. 3. 105.
2. III. 110 : "ज्ञेयं चारण्यकमहं यदादित्यादवाप्तवान् । योगशास्त्रं च मत्प्रोक्तं ज्ञेयं योगमभीप्सता"
3. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. I, pp. 168–69.
4. *Ibid.* 169.

Veda[1]." The *Mitākṣarā* also says at the very beginning that a certain pupil of Yājñavalkya abridged the Dharmaśāstra in the form of a dialogue[2]. It is thus certain that the *Smṛti* is a later compilation of the views of the great master, which was prepared probably during the first two centuries of the Christian era or even a little earlier[3].

**His birth-place :**

Scholars generally hold that this Yājñavalkya was a native of Mithilā. Regarding his birth-place, it has been asserted that some passages of the *Brāhmaṇas* make it, if not absolutely certain, highly probable that he belonged by descent to the Videhas[4]. This is further confirmed, it is claimed, by the fact that his name does not occur in the group of the Kuru-Pañcāla Brāhmaṇas who flocked to Janaka's court[5] — a fact which we have, in the following pages, proved to be incorrect and unfounded. It is true, he was the most distinguished philosopher of the court of that equally distinguished philosopher-king, Janaka ( Kṛti ) of Videha, but the assertion that Mithilā was the land of his birth does not seem convincing in view of the conflicting nature of evidences contained in ancient literature.

During the period under review, Mithilā was the home of Vedic culture, and intellectually most advanced, which attracted renowned scholars from the remotest parts of the country. Yājñavalkya was undoubtedly the most prominent figure and the centre of all philosophical activities in the court of the Maithila king. His very name, according to Pāṇini, means, "one who promulgates sacrifices[1]." First of all, he appears as one of a small group of wandering scholars including Śvetaketu Āruṇeya and Śuṣma Sātyayajñin when they met Janaka of Videha and had a discussion on some obstruse rituals. Janaka asked them to explain the offering of Agnihotra oblation. Yājñavalkya gave a satisfactory answer, but it contained some flaws which were pointed out to him by the former who later himself explained the offering of Agnihotra. He then put questions to Yājñavalkya and thenceforward became a Brāhmaṇa or Brahmaniṣṭa i.e. knower of Brahman[2].

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[1] *Ibid.*, 169, For other details see, 181 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* 169 : "याज्ञवल्क्यशिष्यः कश्चित्प्रश्नोत्तररूपं याज्ञवल्क्यप्रणीतं धर्मशास्त्रं संक्षिप्य कथयामास"

[3] Besides *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti* we have three other works connected with his name, viz. *Vṛddha-Yāj.*, *Bṛhad-Yāj.* and *Yoga-Yāj.* For a detailed discussion of these works and their dates, see Kane, *Op. Cit.* 188–90.

[4] The writer of these lines formerly also held the same view ( *HM.* 102 ) which, in the light of new materials does not seem correct. Also, see S. V. Ketkar *Mahārāṣṭrīya Jñānakośa* ( Poona, 1932 ), *Prastāvanā Khaṇḍa*, 1, *Vibhāga* 3, p. 448.

[5] Mookerjee, *Men & Thought in Ancient India*, 55.

This episode must be treated as a very important one, for it gave a break in Yājñavalkya's life who was now greatly respected as a teacher by the great Janaka[3]. It has another significant aspect too. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* clearly states that these wandering scholars were all from the Kuru-Pañcāla country. In other words, Yājñavalkya originally hailed from Kuru-Pañcāla which in ancient times included western U. P., the Punjab, parts of Gujrat and the adjoining tracts. When Janaka respected him as his teacher, he probably settled down in Mithilā and became his most renowned court-philosopher. It was there that he postulated his celebrated theory of the means of self-realisation which later led him to the crowning act of his life — the renunciation of the world and adoption of a mendicant's life, and thence became renowned as *Yogīśvara*. It was but natural that such a great philosopher should have been hailed and accepted as a Maithila after his settling down there by the scholars of the land who took great pride in following his leadership in the

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1. IV. 2. 104 : "अव्ययात्त्यप"
2. For a detailed discussion, see *Śat. Brā.* XI, 6. 2. 1. Also see A. K. Coomarswamy, "Janaka & Yājñavalkya" in *IHQ.*, 1937, pp. 260–78.
3. *Śat. Brā.*, XI. 6. 2. 1.

world of letters. According to Mithilā-tradition, the signs of his āśrama are yet extant. A large banian tree at Jogaban near the Kamataul station on the N. E. Rly. ( in the district of Darbhanga ) is adorned as his hermitage. The *Mithilā-tīrtha-prakāsa*, however, places his āśrama near Dhanukhā in the village of Kusuma in Nepal[1] which was once the part of the Maithila territory.

That Yājñavalkya was not a child of the soil but just a domicile, is also borne out by several facts which have not yet received proper notice of scholars who have unanimously accepted him as a native of Mithilā. History is full of such instances of emigrants as have passed for the original inhabitants of the land where they first came and settled down, and in course of time merged with the local elements so completly as to render it impossible to distinguish them from the original inhabitants of the country. Against this background, the following facts, having bearing on the life and birth-place of Yājñavalkya, may be taken into consideration :

(i) From the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[2] we learn that Janaka Vaideha once performed a *Bahudakṣiṇa* sacrifice. All the learned Brāhmaṇas of the Kuru–Pañcāla country were invited. Janaka wanted to know as to who was the most learned of *these Brāhmaṇas*. The term, *these Brāhmaṇas*, undoubtedly refers to those coming from the Kuru-Pañcāla country. Of the eight renowned philosophers of the time who put difficult metaphysical questions to Yājñavalkya, Aśvala, the hotri-priest of Janaka was also one. This shows that Yājñavalkya by this time was treated as a foreigner even by the hotri-priest of Janaka. Had he been accepted as a leader of Maithila philosophers, it is but natural to presume that atleast Aśvala would have refrained from putting questions to him with a view to discrediting him. It was probably after this memorable episode that Janaka, out of respect for his great learning, offered him his entire kingdom and wealth and persuaded him to settle there and live in his court as his most respected teacher.

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[1] Dowson. *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology*, 337–38.

[2] 3. 1.

(ii) Had he originally belonged to Videha, Janaka would not have been unaware of his euridite learning and scholarship, which any king or country worth the name would rightly have been proud of.

(iii) Even during the time of the Buddha, Kuru-Pañcāla was a recognised seat of philosophy which enjoyed unrivalled fame in this field right from the time of the Ṛgveda down to the rise of Yājñavalkya, though by this time Kaikeya, Kāśī and Videha also gradually came to be celebrated as seats of learning and scholarship. With Yājñavalkya domiciled in Videha, now the centre of learning gradually shifted from Kuru-Pañcāla to Videha[1], which later came to be recognised as the undisputed home of advancement and enlightenment.

(iv) Moreover, the name 'Yājñavalkya' is quite peculiar to Mithilā tradition and has never been popular either with the educated or with the uneducated, whereas the names of the sages and philosophers have found favour with the Maithilas who have adopted them for naming their children.

**Literary Evidence :**

We have, however, no mention of his birthplace in our ancient literature. Some scholars[2] believe that he was born in Camatkārapura, Vṛddhanagara ( modern Vaḍanagara in northern Gujrat ) but later he accepted the citizenship of Videha on the request of King Janaka and settled there[3].

He was a scion of the distinguished family to which Viśvāmitra, Cārāyaṇa, Devarāta, Brahmarāta, and other great seers belonged, and the name of his mother was Sunandā.

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[1] For other details, see R. Sāṅkṛtyāyana, *Darśana-digdarśana*, 457–58.

[2] Hari Svāmi, *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Ed.) Bombay, 1940, pp. 26 ff.

[3] *Ibid.* "महामुनिर्याज्ञवल्क्य-चमत्कारपुरं, वृद्धनगरं ( वडनगर इति उत्तरगुजरातप्रान्ते प्रसिद्धम् ) वा अधिवसति स्म। यदा च जनकराज्यस्य देशिकपदमंगीचकार तदानीं मिथिलामध्युषितवान् …"

Regarding his exact birth-date and year there is a great controversy among scholars and nothing definite can be said in the present state of our knowledge[1].

Though nothing definite can be adduced in favour of the above contention, there is, however, a very strong factor, besides the literary evidence quoted above, which supports his Gujrāti birth. There is still prevalent in Gujrāt a *gotra* after his name amongst the Brāhmaṇas[2], whereas no such *gotra* or anything of the kind is to be traced in Mithilā which claims his nativity. On the other hand, we have in this part of the country numerous *gotras* named after the great seers who once flourished there and enriched the land by their sparkling genius. Had Yājñavalkya been a child of the soil, he would not have been ignored when even comparatively much smaller seers and philosophers have been immortalised by the Maithilas in various ways. This is undoubtedly a very strong proof in support of Gujrāt or the adjoining Kuru-Pañcāla country being the land of his birth.

The above discussion makes it absolutely clear that Mithilā in no case was the birth-place of the great philosopher. It was only after the historic meeting between the great philosopher-king and the great philosopher that the latter settled down in Mithilā after the former accepted him as his teacher; and it was in the great halls of Mithilā that Yājñavalkya shone the brightest among the luminaries of the age and of all times to come. It was, therefore, natural that the Maithila scholars should have accorded him all honour and respect and unanimously accepted him as their sole and undisputed leader who had no match, no rival in the field of learning.

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[1] *Ibid.* 26–27.

[2] I am endebted to my esteemed friend Prof. Śobhākānta Jhā of the Mithilā Research Institute, Darbhanga for this valuable piece of information.

**Pūrva-mīmaṁsa and Vedānta :**

The story of the growth and development of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta or the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā — the two different systems of Indian philosophy — is indeed a fascinating chapter in the history of human thought and culture. It is the story of the centuries of struggle of the great seers and teachers in quest of the sacred wisdom and truth and the knowledge of God and spiritual life: of the sacred hopes and aspirations of sincere souls like the *ṛṣis* of the Upaniṣads and of the supreme efforts and ceaseless endeavours of the later thinkers to justify by reason what faith implicitly accepts.

This consistent search for truth and knowledge gave birth to different systems of thought or darśanas of which six became more famous and pronounced — ( i ) Gautama's Yoga, ( ii ) Kaṇāda's Vaiśeṣika, ( iii ) Kapila's Sāṁkhya, ( iv ) Patañjali's Yoga, ( v ) Jaiminī's Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and ( vi ) Bādarāyaṇa's Uttara-Mīmāṁsā or the Vedānta. These six systems are treated as Brāhmaṇical, since all of them accept the authority of the Vedas. But, the two mīmāṁsās are directly wedded to the Vedas. The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā investigates the nature of *dharma* propounded in the former section of the Vedas *i.e., Karma-Kāṇḍa,* while the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā or the Vedānta ( the concluding portions of the Vedas ) investigates the nature of Brahman in the latter section, i.e., *Jñāna-Kāṇḍa.* As the former recognises the Vedas as the sole authority on *dharma,* it is treated as an orthodox system of philosophy ( *āstika-darśana* ). These are known as *darśana,* because these systems aim at the final release of man through the highest knowledge and realisation of the highest truth.

The rules of interpretation of the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā literature were formulated for the first time by Jaiminī in a systematic work known as *Jaiminī-sūtra* or *Mīmāṁsā-sūtra.* A number of writers later commented on this work, but of all these, that of Śabara, called *Śabara-bhāṣya* became the most renowned and has formed the basis and starting point for all later Mīmāṁsā works. Śabara might well, therefore, be regarded as the 'Father of Mīmāṁsā-Literature'. Indeed, he had attained this position as early as the time of the great Śaṁkara who quotes his words as those of *Śāstratāt paryavidaḥ*[1].

The Upaniṣads are said to be the Vedānta and they betray two different tendencies — ( i ) that which affirms the identity of Brahman, the individual soul and the world and ( ii ) that which distinguishes them. Efforts have been made to harmonise and reconcile the two different sets of statements, first of all in the *Brahma-sūtra* or the *Vedānta-sūtra* of Bādarāyana. From this work we know that seers like Auḍulomi, Bādari, Jaimini, Kārṣṇājini and Āśmarathya made attempts to systematize the thought of the Upaniṣads prior to Bādarāyaṇa. Their works are, however, not known, and naturally Bādarāyaṇa's work gained more prominence.

The *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhāgavad-Gītā* and the *Brahmasūtra* constitute the *prasthāna-traya* ( the triple basis ) of the Vedānta system. The *Brahmasūtra* is also known as the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā as distinct from the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā which deals with the ritual or the *karma-kāṇḍa*. It has been differently interpreted by different thinkers of which the chief are the Advaita, the Viśiṣṭādvaita, the Dvaita, Bhedābheda and Śuddhādvaita associated with the great names of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka and Vallabha respectively. Of these, however, Śaṁkara's interpretation of the Vedānta philosophy ( the Advaita ) is outstanding which had a far-reaching influence on the philosophers of the later epoch.

The land of Mithilā proved to be the most fertile soil for the two systems of philosophy - Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā - to thrive on. From Gautama to Gaṅgeśā Upādhyāya is a fascinating story of the tremendous growth and development of these systems of philosophy which germinated and blossomed forth into an ever-expanding quest for knowledge, truth and ultimate reality touching all problems of human mind. Besides Nyāya, the philosophy of Mīmāṁsā found its three great exponents in Kumārila, Prabhākara and Murāri, culminating in three different schools. Once again, in the early mediaeval age, the abligation to protect orthodox culture from the sudden onslaught of all heterodox schools of thought pushed Mithilā— the ancient land of Janaka, Yājñavalkya and Gautama — to the fore to take up the crudgels for the defence of the cause of her ancient faith which in its turn saw the birth of some of the unrivalled Naiyāyikas and Mīmāṁsakas in the country between 750 and 1250 A. D. in the person of Kumārila, Maṇḍana, Vācaśpati, Udayana and a host of others.

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[1] *Śārīrakabhāṣya*, 1. 1. 4; also cf. G. N. Jhā, *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā in its Sources*, pp. 14–15.

### The rise of Kumarila & S'aṁkara : the Bhāṭṭa mata

The age of Kumārila and Śaṁkarācārya was the age of great religious ferment and Brāhmaṇic revival. Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* is the root from which sprang forth a host of commentaries and studies on Vedāntism of great originality, vigour and philosophic insight[1].

Kumārila was the vigorous exponent of the Brāhmaṇical orthodoxy which assumes the authoritativeness of the Vedas and the supremacy of the priest. He commented on the *Mīmāṁsā-sūtra* of Jaimini ( *Jaiminīyasūtra* ) and the *Śabara-bhāṣya*, a commentary on the *Jaiminīyasūtra*. His work is in three parts. He is variously known as Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. or Kumārila Svāmin ( or Miśra ) or Tutata Bhaṭṭa. He is one of the brightest gems of Indian philosophy, and flourished in the 7th century A. D. and was contemporary of Dharmakīrti ( with whom he had a long controversy ) and a senior contemporary of the great Śaṁkara[2].

There is a controversy among scholars regarding his birth-place. According to some, he was an inhabitant of South India ; according to others, of North India. There are, however, reasons to believe that he was a Brāhmaṇa of North Bihar or Mithilā whence he had also been to South India. Ānandagiri in his *Śaṁkara-digvijaya* also attests that he came from the North. He uses the term *Udakadeśa* ( the land of water ) for the north which, though quite vague, probably refers to Tairabhukti or Tīrabhukti ( i.e., deśa situated on the bank of the rivers ) -- another name for Mithilā[1] which in later times became the enlightened home of hundreds of mīmāṁsakas and naiyāyikas and which was very close to the home of Buddhism. Ānandagiri also refers to Maṇḍana Miśra as being the *bhaginīpati* ( sister's husband ) of Kumārila. This is a further confirmation of his nativity as Maṇḍana was undisputedly a celebrated thinker of Mithilā and this marriage could have been possible only if Kumārila belonged to Mithilā[2]. Tradition widely current in Mithilā says that Kumārila belonged to the village of Bhaṭṭapura or Bhaṭapurā ( in the district of Darbhanga ) which later on came to be renowned as the seat of Bhaṭṭa school of Mīmāṁsā,

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[1] Dasgupta, *Op. Cit.*, I, 429–94; II, 36–58.

[2] For details regarding his date and time, see G. N. Jhā *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā in its Sources*, pp. 15–19, Appendix, p. 23; S. Kuppuswāmi Śāstrī, *Introduction to the Brahmasiddhi*; R. Sāṅkṛtyāyana, *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. 11–12; Dasgupta, *Op. Cit.* I, 370 ff, 419–29 ff.

It was in the age of Kumārila that Buddhism had spread its influence far and wide. The University of Nālandā was then at the height of its glory and there was a large number of Buddhist thinkers in the country who were vehemently attacking Hindu religion and philosophy. But, inspite of this wide influence, corruption had already set in the Buddhist order. Dharmakīrti tried his best to arrest this dangerous process of deterioration and disintegration in the great order but he met with utter failure. Kumārila rose equal to the occasion, challenged Dharmakīrti, rejected his views threadbare and registered the fatal blow to Buddhism in India. He has criticised the Buddhists in his masterly works such *Ślokavārttika* and *Tantra vārttika*.

The *Śaṁkaradigvijaya* and the Tibetan works give us many interesting stories regarding his controversies with Dharmakīrti. It is said that he was formerly a Buddhist and having learnt all the secrets of Buddhism, later switched on to Hinduism and gave crushing defeat to Buddhists on all fronts in open debates and challenges[3]. His knowledge of Buddhist philosophy was much more profound and accurate than that of the great Śaṁkara, and this decidedly gives him a unique place in the history of Indian thought.

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[1] For detailed discussion, see Thakur, *History of Mithilā*, 8–11.

[2] Also cf. G. N. Jhā, *Op. Cit*, App. 23.

[3] Cf. the *Śaṁkaradigvijaya*, vii.

The *Ślokavārttika*, the *Tantravārttika* and the *Ṭupṭika* are the three well-known parts of his commentary on *Śabarabhāṣya*, noted above. Besides these, he is also the author of *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* and *Madhyamaṭīkā*. He has referred to the former in his *Ślokavārttika*[1].

The *Ślokavārttika* is a versified commentary on the first *Pāda* ( also known as *Tarkapāda* ) of the first chapter of the *Śabarabhāṣya*. It deals with the problems of philosophy from the stand-point of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and sharply refutes the Buddhist stand[2], and gives his own views on the conception of *mokṣa*, the nature of the *Ātman*, *Kāla* and the existence of a subtler body, *Ātivāhikaśarīra*.

The *Tantravārttika* is a prosaic commentary on the *Śabarabhāṣya* from *adhyāya* I, Pada ii to the end of *adhyāya* III. A unique work, it reflects his euridite scholarship and thorough mastery over other schools of thought as well. From a study of this work it is clear that Kumārila believes in the creation and dissolution of the Universe[3]. "Mīmāṁsā", according to him, "is based upon the Vedas, upon ordinary experiences and also upon direct Perception and Inference based upon these, and it has been reared up by an unbroken line of scientific teachers"[4]. Like the Veda, *ākāśa*, *dik*, *kāla*, *Ātman*, and *paramāṇu* are all eternal. He differs from Śabara on the manifestation of sound[5] and remarks that the great master has omitted the interpretation of six of the more important sūtras[6].

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1. Cf. Sūtra 5, *Arthāpattiparicchheda*, verse 9 : "अर्थापत्त्यन्तराणामप्युदाहरणप्रपञ्चः पक्षदोषावसरे 'श्रोत्रादिनास्तितताया' मित्यादिना 'वृहट्टीकायां' दर्शित इत्याह—पक्षदोषेष्विति"
2. For his views, see G. N. Jhā, *Op. Cit.* chaps. II-IX, XVI-XVIII.
3. Benaras edition, p. 28.
4. *Ibid.* p. 80.
5. *Ślokavārttika* ( Banaras ed. ), p. 786.
6. *Tantravārttika* ( Banaras ed. ) pp. 915-16.

*Ṭupṭika*, the third in the series, is very brief and not so important as the other two. Various commentaries have been writteen on these works including those by Umbeka Bhaṭṭa (*Tātparyaṭīkā*), Sucarita Miśra (*Kāśikā*) and Pārthasārathi Miśra (*Nyāyaratnākara*) all on the *Ślokavārttika*; Someśvara Bhaṭṭa (*Nyāyasudhā*), Kamalākara Bhaṭṭa (*Bhāvārtha*), Gopāla Bhaṭṭa (*Mitākṣarā*), Pārthasārathi Miśra (probably *Mīmāṁsā-nyāyaratnākara*) and a host of others (all on the *Tantravārttika*) and Pārthasārathi Miśra (*Tantraratna*) and others on the *Ṭupṭika*.

Kumārila's writings are brilliant and his criticisms of opponents' views quite convincing. His originality of thought and interpretation is writ large on all the pages of his *Vārttikas*. Moreover, he has suggested new lines to explain the knotty philosophical problems, and that way his contributions are unique and second to none. His deep scholarship and profound influence can well be judged from the fact that he came to be celebrated as the founder of a new school of thought in mīmāṁsā, popularly known as the *Bhāṭṭa mata* or School[1].

**Maṇḍana Miśra :**

Maṇḍana is undisputedly a celebrated name both in the field of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta. Mādhavācārya in his *Śaṁkara-digvijaya* says that Maṇḍana was defeated by Śaṁkara in debate and was consequently controverted to Vedānticism and was re-named Sureśvarācārya, the famous author of the *Vārttika* on the *Bhāṣya* which he could not do owing to the intrigues of Śaṁkara's other pupils. He, however, wrote a treatise, *Naiṣakarmyasiddhi* and toed the line of the great master in expounding the orthodox faith and denouncing the Buddhists[2].

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1. For other details, see G. N. Jhā, *Op. Cit.* ; Radhakrishnana, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 378 ff., ; Dasgupta, *Op. Cit.* Vol. I, pp. 355 ff; Vol. II, pp. 111–20 ff.
2. Dasgupta, *Op. Cit.* I, 418 ff; II, 82–102.

This identity is, however, controversial and Dr. Jha[1], S. Kuppuswami Sastri[2], P. V. Kane[3] and others do not believe in this Maṇḍana-Sureśvara equation[4] and place him between 615 and 695 A.D. or 690 and 710 A.D. Any way, he flourished sometime in the 7th century[5] and was a senior contemporary of Śaṁkara.

According to a tradition current in Mithilā he was a Maithila Brāhmaṇa and lived in the village of Māhiṣmatī (modern Mehisi) in the district of Saharsa. He was fairly old at the time of his disputation with Śaṁkara who was then in the prime of his youth. From the *Śaṁkaradigvijaya* we further learn that he was husband of Kumārila's sister. According to some, he was also a disciple of Kumārila[6]. In other words, Kumārila, Maṇḍana and Śaṁkara were contemporaries.

Maṇḍana was the earliest expositor of the *Bhaṭṭa* system and wrote a commentary on Kumārila's *Tantravārttika*. His other important works on Mīmāṁsā are — *Vidhiviveka*[7] which deals with the import of *Vidhi-liṅ* and refutes the stand-point of both *Bhāṭṭa* and *Guru* ( this is regarded as an important work so much so that it has been honoured by an extensive commentary by the great Vācaspati Miśra, known as *Nyāyakaṇikā* ); *Bhavanaviveka* commented upon by Umbeka[8]; *Vibhramaviveka*[9] which discusses four types of *Khyātis; Mīmāṁsānukramaṇikā*[10],

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1. *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 21 ff.
2. *Vibhrama-viveka* of *Maṇḍana Miśra*, Madras, 1922, Intro. i–ii.
3. *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. I, pp. 252–64.
4. Some scholars also identify him with Umbeka ( Vidyāraṇya, *Śaṁkaradigvijaya*, VII. III–117 ) which is wrong ( vide–*Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, App. 33 ).
5. S. N. Dasgupta ( *Op. Cit*, Vol. II, 87 ff. ) places him in 800 A. D.
6. Kuppuswami Sastri, *Vibhrama viveka of Maṇḍana*, Intro. i–ii.
7. Published from Banaras.
8. Edited by Dr. Jhā in the Sarasvatībhavana Series, Banaras.
9. Ed. by S. Kuppuswami Sastri, Madras, 1932.
10. Ed. by Dr. Jhā in the Sarasvatībhavana Series, Banaras.

a versified summary of *Mīmāṁsāsūtra* written with a view to recapitulating all the topics of the *adhikaraṇas* of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and *Sphoṭasiddhi*, a work written to defend the theory of *sphota* against *varṇavādins* wherein he has criticised the views of his own Guru—Kumārila[1].

In his *Vibhramaviveka* he has briefly but critically reviewed four chief theories of *bhrama* ( *khyātivāda* )– ( i ) *ātmakhyāti*, ( ii ) *asat-khyāti* ( iii ) *Akḥyāti* and ( iv ) *anyathākhyāti*. He has tried to maintain the Bhaṭṭa theory of *viparītakhyāti* which is practically the same as the Nyāya theory of *anyathākhyāti* with slight variations. In this Maṇḍana incidentally prepares the way for the *advaita* theory of *anivarcanīyakhyāti*. Moreover, he has thoroughly refuted through an elaborate course of reasoning the *akhyāti* theory of the Prabhākaras.[2]

Maṇḍana, the Vedātin is no less great than Maṇḍana, the celebrated Mīmāṁsaka. He is universally recognised as a very great authority on the *advaita* school of Vedānta and wielded tremendous influence on his contemporaries and also on the later advaitins. That Śaṁkara had to walk all the way from South to Mithilā to win him over to his side to establish his own view-point, indeed, speaks of his great popularity and influence as a scholar and thinker. His *Brahmasiddhi* ( a text-book on pre-Śaṁkara Vedānta ) forms a land-mark in the history of Vedāntic study, on which the great Vācaspati wrote the commentary, known as *Brahmatattva-samīkṣā*. The *Brahmasiddhi* consists of four chapters – ( i ) *Brahmakāṇḍa*, ( ii ) *Tarkakāṇḍa*, ( iii ) *Niyoga-kāṇḍa* and ( iv ) *Siddhikāṇḍa* in the form of verses ( *kārikā* ) and long annotations ( *vṛtti* ).

Of these the *Brahmakāṇḍa* is most remarkable as in it he explains the most important Vedāntic concepts including the nature of Brahman. In the *Tarkakāṇḍa* he argues that "difference" cannot be perceived through perception and as such Upaniṣadic texts cannot and should not be inter-

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1. For other details, see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 21–22.
2. *Vibhramaviveka*, Intro., ii ff.

preted on dualistic lines, for perception reveals difference. In the *Niyogakāṇḍa* he strongly refutes the Mīmāṁsā regarding interpretation of Upaniṣadic texts according to Mīmāṁsā principle of interpretation and in the *Siddhikāṇḍā* he explains that "Upaniṣad texts show that the manifold world of appearance does not exist at all and that its apparent existence is due to the *avidyā* of *Jīva*."[1]

His other works on Vedānta are *Naiṣakarmyasiddhi*[2] referred to above and his most important works are his two *Vārttikas* on the *Śaṁkarabhāṣya* on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Taittirīya Upaniṣads*. Dasgupta[3] ascribes these two *Vārttikas* to Sureśvara who, according to popular tradition, was no other than Maṇḍana.

**Prabhākara Miśra : the Guru-mata.**

Propounder of a new School of Mīmāṁsā, the Prabhākara School ( also popularly known as the *Guru-mata* ), Prabhākara Miśra was one of the most intelligent and independent interpreters of the *Śabarabhāṣya*. He is traditionally said to have been a class-mate of Maṇḍana Miśra and a great disciple of a great teacher — Kumārila and is respectfully called *Guru* by the mīmāṁsakas.

The story goes that he was a pupil of Kumārila who was so much pleased with a novel interpretation given by Prabhākara, the disciple, that he nicknamed the latter as *Guru*, and he is generally spoken of by this title in later Sanskrit philosophical literature on Mīmāṁsā[4].

There is, however, a great controversy regarding the relative chronological position of the two great thinkers. Dr. Jhā believes that he was senior to Kumārila and the two

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1. Dasgupta, *Op. Cit.* II, pp. 87–98.
2. Ed. by Prof. Hiriyana in the Bombay Sanskrit Series.
3. *Op. Cit.*, II, 98–102.
4. For different stories current amongst scholars about his relation with Kumārila, see G. N. Jhā, *The Prabhākara School of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, pp. 9ff; *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, pp. 15-16; *Bṛhatī of Prabhākara Miśra* ( ed. S. K. Rāmanātha Sāstrī ), Intro. 4 ff. etc.

were contemporaries[1]. This view is based mainly on the style of his monumental commentary *Bṛhatī* on *Śabarabhāṣya* which resembles that of Śabara in its "natural grace, simplicity and directness"[2], amongst others. Some scholars, however, take him to be a junior contemporary of Kumārila. Jhā places him between 600 and 650 A. D., while others assign him the period between 610 and 690 A. D.[3] Notwithstanding this controversy regarding their chronological position, there is no doubt that they were contemporaries. Later researches have convincingly shown that Prabhākara, Kumārila and Maṇḍana were not far removed in time and that all of them flourished during the sixth-seventh centuries A. D. These two writers became the celebrated founders of the two Schools of Mīmāṁsā, to which a third was later added in the person of Murāri Miśra II. Consequently, in Mīmāṁsā-literature, the view of Prabhākara is generally referred to as *Guru-mata*, that of Kumārila as *Bhāṭṭa-mata* and that of Murāri as *Miśra-mata*. And, all the later commentators belonged to either of these three different schools.

Like his great contemporary, Prabhākara also wrote a very faithful commentary on the *Śabarabhāṣya* known as *Bṛhatī*[4] or *Nibandhana* which forms the basic text for the Prabhākara School. He wrote another commentary on the *Bhāṣya*, called *Vivaraṇa* or *Laghvī*. The former consists of 12,000 ślokas whereas the latter contains 6,000 ślokas. These works have been commented upon by Sālikanātha Miśra, known as *Ṛjuvimalā* ( on *Vivaraṇa* ) and *Dīpaśikhā* ( on *Niban-*

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[1] *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 15 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* 15-20.

[3] For a detailed discussion of different views see *Ibid.* 15-20, App. 29 ; Jhā, *Prabhākara School*, 9 ff; Śāstrī, *Bṛhatī of Prabhākara Miśra*, Intro; Kuppuswāmi Sāstri, in *Proceedings of the Third Oriental Congress*, 1924 and also his *Introduction to the Brahmasiddhi*, p. lviii etc.

[4] Ed. by S. K. Rāmanātha Sāstri, published by the University of Madras, 1936 ( *Tarkapāda* section with the *Ṛjuvimalā Pañcikā* of Sālikanātha Miśra ).

*dhana* or *Bṛhatī* ). Unfortunately the complete version of the *Bṛhatī* has not yet come to light and is found up to the middle of the *adhyāya* vi only, though later researches have brought to light some portions of the seventh and the eighth *adhyāyas* also[1].

Prabhākara believes in the determinate knowledge[2]. *Sādṛśya* ( resemblance ), according to him, is a distinct category[3]. Inference and analogy are distinct means of cognition[4], and negation is not a distinct *Pramāṇa*[5]. He believes in the theory of *Satkārya* for only the *Laukikas* or *Tārkikas* believe in the distinctive nature of cause and effect[6]. Cognition is self-valid and does not require another means of cognition to support its validity [7]. Motion is an object of inference[8]. Here he differs from the Vaiśeṣika according to whom it is recognizable through direct perception[9]. And, *Ākṛti* is a category that depends on the usage of an old man through the methods of Agreement and Difference[10].

**Vācaspati Miśra :**

The great Vācaspati Miśra's is a name to conjure with in the field of Indian philosophy. He wrote a sub-commentary on *Nyāya-Vārttika* of Udyotakara, elaborated its conceptions and defended them against heterodox and Buddhist criticisms.

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[1] *Ibid*, Foreword, 1.

[2] *Bṛhatī* ( Madras ed. ), p. 53.

[3] *Ibid*, 107 ; also see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 19 ff.

[4] *Bṛhatī*. 107–08.

[5] *Ibid*, 118.

[6] *Ibid*, 83.

[7] *Ibid*, 84.

[8] *Ibid*, 98.

[9] *Vai. Sū.* IV. I. II.

[10] *Bṛhatī*, 328–29. For the comparative views of Kumārila and Prabhākara, see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 26 ff.; App. 30–31 and *The Prabhākara School*, 18 ff; S. N. Dasgupta, *op. cit.* Vol. I, pp. 69, 189, 369 ff.; Vol. II, 66–69, 147, 154 ff ; Radhakrishnan, *op. cit*, Vol. II, 377 ff.

He is said to have belonged to village Ṭhāḍhī in the district of Darbhanga. We stand on a firm ground as regards his date and time. In his *Nyāya-suci-nibandha* he has given the date as 898 ( *vasv-aṅka-vasu-vatsare* ) which in the saṁvat era corresponds to A. D. 841 or 842. In other words, he flourished in the ninth century.

A master of all the six systems of philosophy, Vācaspati was popularly known as *ṣaḍ-darśanavallabha* or *Sarvatantra-svatantra* and *Dvādaśa-darśana-ṭīkākāra* in the world of intellect. His marvellous exposition of Udyotakara's *Nyāya-vārttika* with a view to making clear the right meanings of the latter which was "sinking in the mud as it were through numerous other bad writings" ( *dustarakunibandhapaṅka-magnānām* ) earned him the celebrated title of *Tātparyācārya* meaning "the great expositor". In this work he has militantly defended Udyotakara against the charges of the Buddhist philosopher Dignāga and has sharply attacked his views with all the armoury of his debating skill and logical prowess. His celebrated commentary, *Bhāmatī* ( named after his wife who was childless ) on *Śaṁkarabhāṣya* or *Brahmasūtras* occupies a unique place in the whole gallery of Vedāntic works, in which he has referred to the Buddhist doctrine of *pratītya-samutpāda*[1].

He has also quoted from Dignāga in his *Tātparyaṭīkā*[2] and strongly refuted his views on the contact of sense-organ. His another commentary, *Sāṁkhya-tattva-kaumudī* on Iśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṁkhya-kārikā* is unanimously regarded as an authoritative work in the field of Sāṁkhya literature. He is further credited with having written commentaries on Maṇḍana Miśra's *Vidhiviveka* and *Brahmasiddhi*, known as *Nyāyakaṇikā* and *Tattva-samīkṣā, Tattva-vindu* and other works on Nyāya, Sāṁkhya and Yoga. The unique popularity and influence of Vācaspati can well be judged from the fact that he was recognised as an unquestioned authority on Vedānta in northern India.

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[1] *Bhāmatī*. II, ii; Dasgupta, *op. cit.* i. 418.

[2] 1. i. 4.

Vācaspati's Vedāntic works are *Bhāmatī* and *Tattva-samīkṣā* ( a work not yet published ) and a commentary on Maṇḍana Miśra's *Brahmasiddhi*. But *Bhāmatī* is undoubtedly a very great work and constitutes one of the pillars of Vedāntic studies. "As to the method of Vācaspati's commentary, he always tries to explain the text as faithfully as he can, keeping himself in the background and directing his great knowledge of the subject to the elucidation of the problems which directly arise from the texts and to explaining the allusions and contexts of thoughts, objections and ideas of other schools of thought referred to in the text[1]."

Truth and reality are defined by Vācaspati as immediate self-revelation ( *sva-prakāśatā* ) never to be contradicted ( *abādhita* ). Accordingly he rejects the definition of reality as the participation of the class-concept of being, as the Naiyāyikas hold, capacity of doing work ( *arthakriyā-kāritva* ), as the Buddhists hold. He speaks of *avidyā* being twofold. All appearances accordingly originate from Brahman in association with or with the accessory cause ( *sahakāri-kāraṇa* ) of the two *avidyās* ( *avidyā-dvaitayasacivasya* )[2].

Vācaspati's well known work on Mīmāṁsā is his commentary on the *Vidhiviveka*, called *Nyāyakaṇikā*. S. C. Vidyābhūṣaṇa wrongly took it to be a work on Nyāya. In it he has discussed many important philosophical topics, such as the *asatkāryavāda*, the *Khyātis*, Validity of dream-cognition, *Tamas* as a substance, and several Buddhist topics. In the *Tattvavindu*, which is his independent work, he has mainly discussed the processes of the *śabdabodha* according to various schools, and has closely followed the view-point of the Bhāṭṭa School, and here too, he is as authoritative as elsewhere[3].

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[1] Dasgupta, *op. cit.* ii, 108.

[2] For other details see *Ibid*, 108-11; S. S. Hasurkar, *Vācaspati Miśra on Advaita Vedānta*, chaps. III-IV; M. M. Chakravarty in *JASB*, Vol. XI, *1915, pp. 259-63.*

[3] Both the works are published ( vide—*Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, App. 35-36. )

Thus, in the shining galaxy of the great Advaita thinkers, Vācaspati's is a unique place. His profound and deep impression on the later epoch in the evolution of advaitic thought has unanimously earned for him the respectful title of *Ācārya* by the advaitic philosophers of the later times. An undisputed originator of a separate school of thought, *Jīvāśrita-avidyā-pakṣa* and also of the famous school of *Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda,* his greatness as a versatile thinker and scholar exceeds the domain of Advaita Vedānta thought. His unrivalled genius invades almost all the trodden or untrodden fields of Indian philosophy — heterodox as well as orthodox, materialistic as well as unmaterialistic. Judged from this viewpoint, it can safely be remarked that he has no parallel in Indian philosophy. Be it the school of the atomist Naiyāyika or ritualistic Mīmāṁsaka, the mystic Yogin or the subtle Sāṁkhya, Vācaspati shines and shines the brightest. An intense desire to face the fundamental truth of one's being, the profound philosophical genius and the never-missing discerning attitude borne of an irresistible aptitude for reality are some of the outstanding characteristics that distinctly place Vācaspati above all other philosophers. Every system of Indian philosophy, thus, owes a deep debt to Vācaspati without whom it is poor and loses most of its interest.

### Pārthasārathi Miśra.

After Kumārila and Prabhākara, Pārthasārathi Miśra is another celebrated name in the field of Mīmāṁsā Literature, who was as faithfully devoted to Kumārila as Sālikanātha was a faithful interpreter of the views of Prabhākara. He was well-versed in both the schools, was an inhabitant of Mithilā and learnt the Śāstra from his father, Yajñātman who was a great scholar of his time. He probably flourished sometime in the 10th cent. A. D.[1]

Unlike the running commentaries of Śabara, Prabhākara and Kumārila on the *Jaiminīyasūtras*, the commentary of Pārthasārathi, known as *Śāstradīpikā* runs only on the main *sūtra* of each and every section ( *adhikaraṇa* ) and by way of reference gives the substance of *sūtras* also. Viewed in this context, *Śāstradīpikā*[1] may be regarded as the earliest commentary of its type. It very faithfully elucidates the views of Kumārila on mīmāṁsa and is unquestionably the most important work which attracted a large number of celebrated scholars to write commentaries on it. A comprehensive study on the School of Kumārila, it frequently criticises the views of Prabhākara and refers to Maṇḍana, *Nyāyaratnamālā* and *Tantraratnam*[2] ( the latter two being important works of Pārthasārathi on Mīmāṁsā ), *Śaṁkarabhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhāgavadrāmāyaṇa*.

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[1] Dasgupta places him in the 9th century A. D. and Gopīnātha Kavirāja assigns him the 13th century A. D. Umesha Miśra places him in the 10th century A. D. ( Vide — his Introduction to the *Mīmāṁsāśāstrasarvasva of Halāyudha*, pp. 30–31 ).

His another famous work is his celebrated commentary on the *Ślokavārttika*, called *Nyāyaratnākara*[3], a very popular name among the mīmāṁsakas. It is one of the best commentaries in which he has frequently referred to his own works, *Nyāyaratnamālā* and *Śāstradīpikā*, Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*, Bhavadāsa and Bhartṛmitra. He can thus easily be ranked with the great mīmāṁsakas of all ages[4].

### Udayanācarya

Udayanācārya or Udayana was yet another great thinker who was a militant champion of the Brāhmaṇic faith, and bitterly criticised and mercilessly attacked the Buddhists on all fronts[5]. He is one of the most shining stars on the firmament of Nyāya philosophy.

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[1] Nirṇayasāgara, Bombay edition.

[2] Ed. by G. N. Jhā & U. Miśra in the Sarasvatībhavana Sanskrit Text Series, Banaras.

[3] Published along with the text in the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras.

[4] For other details regarding his views etc., see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, App. pp. 37–43.

[5] Mithilā tradition avers that in the beginning Udayana was so scared of Buddhist influences that he left Mithilā, went over to Bengal and became Dharmādhikaraṇika in the court of the

He was born in village Kariyan which is situated about 12 miles south-east of Darbhanga. In his *Lakṣaṇāvalī* he has given his date as 906 śaka saṁvat which corresponds to A. D. 984[1].

He was the celebrated author of several works some of which rank the highest in the field of Nyāya literature. He wrote a sub-commentary on Vācaspati's *Tātparyaṭīkā* called *Tātparyaṭīkāpariśuddhi*. He was also the author of *Nyāya-Kusumāñjali*, a classical work in which he has tried to prove the existence of God whom the Buddhists openly denied and criticised in their arguments. This work ought to be read with its commentary, *Prakāśa* by Vardhamāna (13th century A. D.) and its sub-commentary, *Makaranda* by Rucidatta ( towards the end of the 13th century ), both Maithila thinkers. But, his uncompromising stand against, and pernicious attack on the Buddhists find full play in his *Ātmatattvaviveka*, also known as *Bauddhādhikkāra* or *Bauddhādhikāra*, a polemical work against the Buddhists in which he has tried to establish the Nyāya doctrine of soul ( Ātman ) by refuting the Anātmavāda ( no-soul theory ) of the Buddhists[2].

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legendary Bengali king Ādiśūra ( P. Jhā, *Mithilā-tattva-vimarśa*, p. 106 ). But, this tradition lacks corroboration from any other source.

[1] Cf. *Lakṣaṇāvalī*, p. 3 :

"तर्काम्बराङ्क प्रतितेष्वतीतेषु शकान्ततः
वर्षपूदयनश्चक्रे सुवाधां लक्षणावलीं"

[2] This great work of Udayana is divided into four *paricchedas*. In the first the author tries to refute the theory of momentariness of the world. In the second he examines the subjectivism of the idealists. In the third he discusses the theory of non-existence of substance apart from its qualities. And, in the fourth he attacks the theory of non-existence of things in this world. This *pariccheda* is most important, for herein the celebrated Naiyāyika puts forth his vigorous arguments to prove the existence of God and the individual self as against the Buddhist theory of anātmavāda. This work has been extensively commented upon by many scholars such as Śaṁkara Miśra, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi, Bhagīratha Ṭhākura, Atreya Nārāyaṇācārya and others.

Besides he was the author of *Kiraṇāvali*, *Lakṣaṇāvalī* and *Nyāya-pariśiṣṭa* and *Bodha-siddhi*. Udayana treated Nyāya from the stand-point of Vaiśeṣika and should, therefore, be considered as the direct predecessor of the Maithila School of Navya-Nyāya.

A zealous exponent of theism, Udayana was first and last a Naiyāyika, and not a Vedāntin which is supported by a critical study of his whole work. He believed in the existence of Ātmā which differs from body, mind and other elements — a view fundamentally opposed to the monism of Vedānta.

Śrīdhara wrote in śaka 913, a sub-commentary on the *Bhāṣya* of Praśastapāda, known as *Nyāya-kandalī*[1] in which he has acknowledged only six categories. The Maithila or Gaurīya School, however, gave little or no recognition to this work. On the other hand, his contemporary, Udayana's *Kiraṇāvalī*, another sub-commentary on the same *Bhāṣya* in two sections ( *dravya* and *guṇa* ) powerfully influenced the later Navya-Nyāya schools. In this commentary he also speaks of only six categories. In his *Lakṣaṇāvalī* ( on definitions ), however, he divides categories under two heads — the *bhāva* with the six categories and the *abhāva* ( the seventh ) which is in complete agreement with Śivāditya's classification.

Besides the famous *Ātmatattvaviveka* or the *Bauddhādhikkāra*[2], his *Nyāya-kusumāñjali* ( a handful of Nyāya flowers ) in *stavakas* or bunches, consists of 71 *kārikās* or verses on the existence of God, with a commentary of his own, the *Kusumāñjali-prakaraṇa* in which he relentlessly attacks the views of Saugatas, Digambaras, Cārvākas, Mīmāṁsakas, Sāṁkhyas and also Vedāntists. The seventeenth verse of the fifth bunch is symbolic of his noble ideas which are unique :

"Iron-souled are they in whose hearts thou canst find no place, though thus washed by the repeated inundations of ethics and Vedic texts ; yet still in time, Oh Merciful One, thou in thy goodness canst save even those who oppose our proposition, and make them undoubting in their conviction of thy existence"[1].

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[1] The work is printed in the Vizianagram series.

[2] Cf. *Ātmatattvaviveka* ( ed. Dhundhirāja Śāstrī ), Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras.

We have a very interesting anecdote concerning the life of this great thinker. It is said, he strove hard to prove the existence of God, but God in his turn did not prove to be equally kind to him. Hard pressed and mentally distressed, one day this greatest supporter of God challenged him in the following words :

> "*Aiśvaryamadamatto'si māmavajñāya vartase*
> *Punarbauddhe samāyāte madadhīnā tava sthitiḥ*".

( O God, you have become intoxicated with power and so you disregard me : But remember that if my existence depends on you, Your existence also depends upon me when You are assailed by Buddhists )[2].

It is, however, interesting to note that this long story of polemics between the Buddhist logicians and the Hindu Naiyāyikas and the subsequent attacks and counter-attacks were ultimately responsible for the tremendous growth and development of Indian logic and Vedānta philosophy which attained its highest stature and glory by the end of the 10th century A. D.

**Murāri Miśra** : *the Miśra-mata*

After Pārthasārathi Miśra and before the rise of Murāri Miśra (II), the propounder of *Miśra-mata* in Mīmāṁsā, the scene was dominated by a great many mīmāṁsakas including Bhavanātha Miśra[3], the author of *Nayaviveka* regarded as a masterpiece by scholars ( sometime in the 10th century just after Pārthasārathi Miśra ); Gurumatācārya Candra, author of *Nyāyaratnākara,* a commentary on the *Jaiminīyasūtras* and *Amṛtabindu,* an independent treatise ( before 1100 A. D. ) and Paritoṣa Miśra, author of the commentary, known as *Ajitā* or *Tantraṭīkānibandhana* on the *Tantravārttika* ( 12th century )[1].

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[1] Cowell's trans. of *Nyāyakusumāñjali*, p. 85 ; also see M. M. Chakravarty, *op. cit.* 263.

[2] According to some scholars, in this verse, in his crusade against the Buddhists he had really challenged the Lord Jagannātha, who is also regarded as the incarnation of the Buddha ( cf. Miśra, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 500; P. Jhā. *op. cit.*, pp. 105–09 etc. ); also see *Supra*, Chap. IV.

[3] He was different from Bhavanātha Miśra, popularly known as Ayācī Miśra, the celebrated Mīmāṁsaka-father of the celebrated Śaṁkara Miśra. He flourished in the 15th century and was a Maithila Brāhmaṇa.

Murāri Miśra, the propounder of the third School in Mīmāṁsā, appears to have struck out a fresh path in relation to certain important topics which has led to the famous saying among the scholars : *Murārestṛtīyaḥ panthāḥ* ( the third path or school of Murāri ), the first and second apparently being Prabhākara and Kumārila. His views are quite distinct and convincing, *e.g.* his independent view on the theory of the Validity of knowledge ( *pramāṇyavāda* ). Mīmāṁsakas in general support the theory of the Self-validity of knowledge ( *svataḥ prāmāṇyavāda* ) and the Naiyāyikas support the *parataḥ prāmāṇyavāda.* While Prabhākara supports the former, Kumārila's views are somewhat different from him. Murāri ( who also happened to be a great Naiyāyika ) differs from both these and suggests an entirely new line which is slightly influenced by the Nyāya system.

As regards his work, only two small but very important fragments of his commentary on the *Jaiminīyasūtras* known as *Tripādinītinayanaṁ* and *Ekādaśādyādhikaraṇaṁ*[2] were discovered recently otherwise much is not known except through references in other works. Pakṣadhara Miśra in his *Āloka* has briefly but neatly brought out the distinction among the three schools of Mīmāṁsā in regard to the Validity of Cognitions[3].

He flourished sometime between the 11th and 12th centuries

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[1] For details regarding these scholars, see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, App. 43–45.

[2] Published and edited by Umesha Miśra in 1928.

[3] For other details regarding his *mata*, see *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, 23-24, App. 45–46.

A. D.[1] Vardhamāna, son of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya, has referred to him in several of his works.

After him, a long line of scholars in Mithilā and Bihar kept up this glorious tradition of Mīmāṁsā for centuries. It is said that even in the 15th century, during the reign of queen Viśvāsa Devī, there was a vast gathering of scholars in Mithilā in which some fourteen hundred mīmāṁsakas alone were invited to her court on the eve of a sacrifical ceremony[2] — a unique gathering indeed !

**Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya : The Navya-Nyāya School :**

Besides Mīmāṁsā, a new school of Nyāya philosophy, known as Navya-Nyāya ( neo-logic ) was started in Bihar during the period under review, the credit for which goes to Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya ( 1200 A. D.[3] ) of Mithilā. It was a distinct and marvellous contribution to the Indian system of thought which dominated the philosophical scene for centuries. Mithilā during this period was a celebrated seat of learning and scholars from different parts of the country came to receive the highest training in logic and other branches of learning in the universally reputed University of Mithilā.

Gaṅgeśa, the founder of this new School, belonged to Mangaraunī, a village ( near Madhubani ) in the district of Darbhanga. It is said, he had established his reputed academy at the village Kariyana[4], the birth-place of the great Udayana who was also one of his predecessors in the field.

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1. *Ibid.* App. 46. For other mīmāṁsakas who flourished after him see pp. 47–74.
2. For this grand conference of mīmāṁsakas, see Thakur, *History of Mithilā*, p. 378.
3. For different views regarding his date and time, see M.M. Chakravarty, *op. cit.* 264–65; *Materials for the study of Navya-Nyāya Logic* ( Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 40. ), pp. 4–6; Dasgupta, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 308; Chintaharan Chakravarty, *History of Navya-Nyāya* in *Mithilā*; Thakur, *op. cit*, pp. 4, 305, 376 & 378.
4. Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *History of Indian Logic*, p. 405; *Materials for the study of Navya-Nyāya*, 4–5; M. M. Chakravarty, *op. cit*, 265; Thakur, *op. cit*, 375 ff; *History of Navya-Nyāya*, etc.

Navya-Nyāya or the new School of Logic is based on an amalgam of old Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. The standard works on both these systems were constantly used and referred to by the later writers. The first real commentator was Vācaspati Miśra on the *sūtras* and their *vārttika* which we have noted above in the preceding pages. Udayana was a direct predecessor of this Maithila School. Besides, Śrīharṣa's *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya* ( The Sweets of refutation ) had a hand in moulding the views of the Navya-Nyāya School. Then came Gaṅgeśa, the founder, who wrote his masterly work, *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* ( The Thought-jewel of fruits ) in which he has criticised Śrīharṣa's views.

The *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* constitutes a land-mark in the history of Indian thought. Gaṅgeśa accepts many tenets of the Vaiśeṣika School, and in this respect his work differs from the oldest Nyāya. But the more significant change is "in the direction of Gaṅgeśa's artillery. The old Nyāya had directed its argument against Buddhism. Gaṅgeśa, living in an age when Buddhism had almost disappeared in India, directs his attack more against the Mīmāṁsā, the Vedānta and other living schools of philosophy. But above all, the newness of Gaṅgeśa's method is a newness of style and of organization. He is far more precise, more careful to define his terms, than were his predecessors. These virtues of his work are responsible for the fact that perhaps half of Navya-Nyāya literature is based either directly on the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* or on a commentary on the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi*.[1]"

Gaṅgeśa accepts only the four *pramāṇas* ( Gautama's four-fold classification of proofs ) admitted by the Nyāya, *viz*, ( i ) *Pratyakṣa* ( perception ) , ( ii ) *anumāna* ( inference with a special sub-section on Īśvar-ānumāna or the inference about God ) , (iii) *Upamāna* or comparision and (iv) *Śabda* or affirmation, and not on any of the topics of Nyāya metaphysics. These sections are further sub-divided into *Vādas* or discussions : *Pratyakṣa* having twelve, *anumāna* seventeen, *Śabda* sixteen and *Upamāna* none.

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[1] *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya Logic*, 5-6.

The whole field of Nyāya has been reviewed by Gaṅgeśa who defends it against the attacks of other systems. He has criticised their views with noble and original remarks. The Sāṁkhya and Vaiśeṣika are criticised least, but he has ruthlessly and unsparingly slashed the mīmāṁsakas, especially the Bhāṭṭas and the Prabhākaras. While quoting the views and opinions of the previous thinkers he has referred to a select few, *eg.*, Jayanta, Maṇḍana, Vācaspati, Śivāditya Miśra, Udayana etc.

One thing, however, deserves special mention in connection with his *Tattva-cintāmaṇi.* Of all the *Pramāṇas*, his discussions on *anumāna* (inference) attracted widest attention in Navadvīpa ( Bengal ) and other parts of the country. Large numbers of commentaries and commentaries of commentaries were written on the *anumāna* portion of his work. The nature of *Vyāpti* ( the relation of universal concomitance between the middle and major terms, otherwise known as the problem of Induction in Logic ), the basis of all inference, was subjected to the most critical examination. Though one of the knottiest problems, Gaṅgeśa discussed it threadbare in the minutest detail. In addition to this, many independent treatises on *śabda* and *anumāna* also came to be written by the scholars of Bengal which became subsequently the home of Nyāya studies for some centuries, well known as the Gaurīya School or the Nādiā School founded by the celebrated Raghunātha Śiromaṇi ( 1500 A. D. ), a disciple of the great Pakṣadhara Miśra of Mithilā. The commentaries of Raghunātha, Mathurā Bhaṭṭācārya ( 1580 A. D. ) , Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya and others were widely read and commented upon in Bengal[1]. Thus, in course of a few centuries, commentaries, sub-commentaries and glosses by successive generations of scholars gave birth to a vast literature round the original work. Judged by this standard, it can hardly be gainsaid that the popularity of the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* has been unique and unequalled.

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[1] Dasgupta, *op. cit.* vol. I. p. 308 ; M. M. Chakravarty, *op. cit.* 272–92 ; *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya*, 6 ff ; *History of Navya-Nyāya in Mithilā.*

Gaṅgeśa also wrote two other small works, called the *Lakṣaṇamañjarī*[1] in which he covered part of the ground covered by the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* and the *Lakṣaṇatattvam*[2].

**Vardhamāna Upādhyāya :**

Vardhamāna, son of the illustrious Gaṅgeśa, is the author of some of the famous Vaiśeṣika commentaries. He is perhaps the oldest commentator on Udayana's works and on Śrīharṣa's Vedantic work. His commentaries on Nyāya include the *Tattvacintāmaṇi-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi* ) , the *Nyāyanibandha-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Udayana's *Nyāyavārttika-tātparyapariśuddhi* ) , the *Nyāya-pariśiṣṭa-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Udayana's *Nyāyapariśiṣṭa*), the *Prameyanibandha-prakāśa* or the *Prameyatattva-bodha*(quoted in Rucidatta's *Nyāyakusumāñjali-prakāśa-makaranda* ). Besides, he wrote *Kiraṇāvali-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Udayana's work in two sections — *Dravya* and *Guṇa* ) , the *Nyāyakusumāñjali-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Udayana's famous polemical work ), the *Nyāyalīlāvatī-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Vallabhācārya's work quoted in Jayadeva's or Pakṣadhara's *Āloka* ) on Vaiśeṣika and the *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya-prakāśa* ( a commentary on Śrīharṣa's famous work ) on Vedānta[3]. In other words, Vardhamāna was the celebrated author of *prakāśas*.

He flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century and was an illustrious pupil of his illustrious father-preceptor[4]. Mādhavācārya ( Vidyāraṇya of Vijayanagara ) in his *Śarvva-*

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1. This work is different from a work of the same name by Rucidatta.
2. *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya*, *p.* 6 & *fn.* 15.
3. M. M. Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, 265–66 ; *History of Navya-Nyāya.*
4. In the introductory verse of his *Līlāvatī-prakāśa* he refers to his father :

"न्यायाम्भोजपतङ्गाय मीमांसापारदृश्वने
गंगेश्वराय गुरवे पित्रेऽत्र नमः"

This Vardhamāna was different from the great jurist of the same name who flourished in the fifteenth century A. D. – ( vide — Thakur, *History of Mithilā*, pp. 308, 325, 356, 372.

*darśana-saṁgraha* respectfully refers to him and this no doubt speaks of his great influence and importance. His commentaries greatly facilitated the study of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika and helped establish the Navya-Nyāya School of his father on a solid basis. It is true, the Navya-naiyāyikas have continued to improve their techniques almost down to present times, but the boundaries of their subject-matter were set by the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi* and also by the Vaiśeṣika commentaries of Vardhamāna[1].

This glorious tradition of Navya-Nyāya was brilliantly kept up till the seventeenth century by a gallaxy of illustrious thinkers and scholars like Jayadeva ( alias Pakṣadhara ) Miśra, Vāsudeva Miśra, Rucidatta Miśra, Bhagīratha Ṭhakkura, Maheśa Ṭhakkura, Śaṁkara Miśra, Vācaspati Miśra II ( the *abhinava* Vācaspati ), Misaru Miśra III, Durgādatta Miśra, Devanātha Ṭhakkura, Madhusūdana Ṭhakkura and others in the following centuries[2].

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[1] *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya*, p. 6.

[2] M. M. Chakravarty, *op. cit.* 267–71 ; *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya*, 6–27 ; *History of Navya-Nyāya*; Thakur, *History of Mithilā*, vol. II ( MS ) , Chap. V.

# CHAPTER III

# THE RISE AND GROWTH OF JAINISM

*Introduction :*

As in the history of Buddhism, so in the history of Jainism, Mithilā or North Bihar played a very significant part for centuries. Few places in India have stronger claims upon the veneration of both Jainas and Buddhists. Mahāvīra, the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara of the Jainas, and commonly spoken of as "the founder of the Jaina Church", was a scion of the noble family of Vaiśālī where he was born and spent the early part of his life. It is, therefore, a place of pilgrimage for the Jainas just as Sāranātha and other places associated with the life of the Buddha are of the Chinese, Burmese and the Buddhists of other countries. Thus, Vaiśālī is to the Jainas what Jarusalem is to the Christians and Mecca to to the Muslims. The tragedy, however, is that Brāhmaṇical works and traditions ignore Vaiśālī, and we do not come across any remarkable event in the history of orthodox Hinduism which seems to be connected with the locality. In the 7th century A. D., when Yuan Chwang visited this place, the region abounded in Hindu temples, Buddhist monasteries, mostly dilapidated and deserted, and numerous Jaina establishments. The Nirgrantha monks are said to have still lived at Vaiśālī in large numbers. Neither had it become a place of pilgrimage to the Jainas in modern days, such as Pāvāpurī in the Patna district where Mahāvīra died or Campā near Bhagalpur[1], nor had any body cared to look for the Jaina antiquities there till recently. The archaeologists have betrayed a colossal indifference towards searching for Jaina remains on this site. As a matter of fact, they have concentrated their efforts exclusively on tracing Buddhist remains and holy places as described in Buddhist works and in the accounts of travellers like Yuan Chwang and others.

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[1] *ASI. Report,* 1903-04, p. 87.

Their reports on the whole have nothing to support or confirm Basārh area as being the birth-place of Jainism[1] — a fact which is otherwise evidenced by volumes of literary sources. In the following lines, we propose to discuss in detail the various literary and archaeological sources which have a strong bearing on the rise and spread of Jainism in North Bihar, hitherto ignored and uncared for.

### Vaiśalī : The Birth-place of Mahavīra :

The importance of Vaiśālī does not lie only in its being the capital-seat of a strong and well-organised republic but also in its being a very great centre of the currents and cross-currents of various religious thoughts and philosophies. (Vaiśālī, the ancient seat of the Licchavis and the erstwhile capital of republican Videha[2], first of all, emerges into history as the sacred birth place of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, one of the great leaders of Jainism. He was born at Kuṇḍagrāma, one of the three districts of Vaiśālī[3] and belonged to the Jñātrika clan[4]. He, therefore, came to be known as *Vesālie* or *Vaiśālika* meaning a native of Vaiśālī, or the first citizen of Vaiśālī[5]. His father, Siddhārtha was the Chief ( *Kulapati* ) of the Naya clan ( Jñātrika clan ) whose wife Triśalā was sister of Cetaka, king of Vaiśālī. She is called Vaidehī, or Videhadattā, because she belonged to the ruling family of Videha, and hence Mahāvīra is also known by various maternal names such as Videha, Vaidehadattā, Videhajātya and Videhasukumāra[6].

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[1] V. A. Smith, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, pp. 567–68 ( New York, 1921 )

[2] For a detailed geographical and historical account of ancient Mithilā, see the writer's book, *History of Mithilā*, pp. 2 ff ; *Supra*, Chap. I.

[3] For other details about Vaiśālī, see *Ibid.*, Chap. III.

[4] Hoernle, *Uvāsagadasāo* ( Bibliotheca Indica Series ), pp. 3–6.

[5] *Sūtra-Kṛtāṅga*, 1, 3.

[6] *Ācārāṅgasūtra*, 389. "समणस्स णं भगवओ महावीरस्स अम्मा वासिट्ठस्सगुत्ता तीसे णं तिन्नि ना०, तं -- तिसला इव विदेहदिन्ना इव पियकारिणी इवा ।" Also see J. C. Jain, *Life in Ancient India as depicted in the Jaina canons*, pp. 254, 355.

The story of Mahāvīra's birth is as interesting as the story of Buddha's birth. It is said, one night Rānī Triśalā dreamt of an ox, an elephant, a lion, a garland of flowers, Lakṣmī ( the Goddess of wealth ), the moon, the sun, the flag, a pond and the ocean of milk etc. When the Paṇḍitas heard of her dreams, they prophesied that she would give birth to an extra-ordinary child who would be a great conqueror or a great teacher. The prophesy turned out to be too true.

Mahāvīra was born of Triśalā in 561 B. C. He was married to Yaśodā, the daughter of Samantavīra, of village Basantapura. Ten years after his marriage, he was blessed with a daughter, Priyadarśana. Two years later he gave up his life of luxury and pleasures and dedicated himself to a life of austerities and after twelve years of severe penance he attained Divine Light at the age of 42 at the viilage Ambhika on the bank of the river — Rajupalikā. After propagating his mission for 31 years he attained *nirvāṇa* at Pāvāpurī, near Patna at the age of seventy-two.

From the above accounts it is clear beyond doubt that Mahāvīra was an inhabitant of Vaiśālī ( from his father side ) and a citizen of Videha or Mithilā ( from his mother side )[1]

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[1] For a detailed discussion of Mahāvīra's birth-place, see Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras*, pt. ii, ( *SBE*. Vol. XXII, Intro. x-xiii ); *Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics.*, Vol. VII. p. 466; Hoernle, *Uvāsagadasāo*, pp. 3–6; Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 21–22, 28; Smith in *JRAS*, 1902, pp. 282–83, 286–87; *CHI*. I. p. 157; Rockhill, *Life of Buddha*, p. 62; *ASR*, Vols. I & XVI; 1903–04, pp. 81–122; 1913–14, pp. 98–185; Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 173; Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana, *Darśana-digdarśana* ( Hindi ), p. 492; B. C. Law, *Mahāvīra : His Life and Teachings*, pp. 19 ff; C. J. Shah, *Jainism in North India*, pp. 23–24; *Homage to Vaiśālī* ( ed. Mathur and Mishra ), pp. 4–5, 76–79, 85–90, 92–94, etc.; *Śramaṇa Bhagavāna Mahāvīra* ( in 5 Vols. ); H. L. Jain, "Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture" in *JBRS*. Vol. XLV, p. 4.

Inspite of volumes of evidences supporting Vaiśālī as the birth-place of Mahāvīra, P. C. Roy Choudhury ( *Jainism in*

Mithilā or Videha, therefore, has a much greater claim on Mahāvīra whose personality and teachings rapidly built up Vaiśālī as a centre of Jainism and of the spiritual discipline and asceticism upon which it was based. Besides Mahāvīra, Basupūjya, the twelfth Tīrthaṅkara is said to have attained his *nirvāṇa* at Campāpura (Bhagalpur) and Naminātha, the twenty-first Tīrthaṅkara was also born in Mithilā. Mahāvīra himself is said to have spent twelve rainy seasons in Vaiśālī and six rainy seasons in Mithilā.[1]

It will thus be seen that Aṅga, Magadha, the territories of the Vṛjji-Licchavis, the Mallas and the kingdom of Kāśī-Kosala were the scenes of wanderings of Mahāvīra and activities of his Nirgrantha followers in the life-time of the Buddha. It is from the Buddhist texts that we learn that Mahāvīra and his immediate followers concentrated their religious activities in Rājagṛha, Nālandā, Vesālī (Vaiśālī), Pāvā and Sāvatthi. We further learn that in Vaiśālī Mahāvīra had a large number of staunch supporters and followers among the Licchavis and the Videhans.[2] Some of his followers appear to be men of the highest position. The *Vinaya Piṭaka*[3] says that Siha or Siṁha, a Licchavi general ( who was a follower of the religion of Mahāvīra ) was afterwards converted to the Buddhist faith. Saccaka, a Nigaṇṭha, challenged the Buddha himself to a discussion on philosophical tenets before an assembly of five hundred Licchavis.[4] We have thus numerous instances of such converts in Buddhist works,[5] as clearly point

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*Bihar*, pp. 1, 13–14 ) seems inclined to identify Kuṇḍalapura in Vaiśālī or Videha with Kuṇḍalapura in Nālandā in Patna District—a view which has already been convincingly refuted by scholars as absurd and unwarranted.

[1] *Kalpa-Sūtra* ( vide—Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 32 ff ).

[2] Law, *Mahāvīra*, pp. 7 ff.

[3] *Vinaya Texts*, (*SBE*. XVII), pp. 108 ff.

[4] *Majjhima*, I. 227–37.

[5] cf. *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, II. 190–94. 200–2; *Saṁyutta*, V, 389–90; *Aṅguttara*, III. 167–68; *Psalms of the Brethren*, pp. 56, 106; *Psalms of the Sisters*, pp. 23–24, 79–80, 120–21, 125; *Aṅguttara*, V. 133; *Majjhima*, III, 68–70.

to the great influence of Mahāvīra on the life of the people, high and low, in Vaiśālī and Videha, even during the life-time of the Buddha. Further, according to the Jainas, Mithilā or Videha was included in the Jaina Āryan countries. These countries were known as Āryan for it is said that the *Titthayaras*, the *Gakkavaṭṭis*, the *Baladevas* and the *Vāsudevas* were born here. These great men are said to have attained omniscience in these countries and by attending to their preaching a number of people were enlightened and had taken to ascetic life[1].

Vaiśālī thus appears to have achieved an early reputation in the religious world of India and her teachers, devoted to the practice of uttermost penance and austerity preached by Mahāvīra, the great apostle of this creed, had gained fame far and wide. It was the quest of a teacher that attracted the unknown Buddha, the Bodhisattva ( after he renounced the world and became a monk ) to Vaiśālī, then well-known for its abundance of teachers,[2] and it was there that he found in Ālāra Kālāma, a native of Vaiśālī, his teacher[3] who is said to have been "so advanced in meditation that sitting on the road, he did not hear or see even 500 carts rattling past him."[4] According to Mrs. Rhys Davids, Buddha found his first two teachers—Ālāra and Uddaka at Vaiśālī and under their teachings, even started his religious life as a Jaina.[5] His resort to a course of rigid austerities associated with Jainism and adoption of a way of life of a good Jaina, like Mahāvīra, undoubtedly speaks of his Jaina beginnings on way to Nirvāṇa. This extreme of mortification, however, told dangerously upon his health, and under compulsion of circumstances he bade good-bye to Jainism and ultimately discovered the well-known *middle-path* ( *i.e.* the path lying between the two extremes of self-torture and self-indulgence) for himself which soon became

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1. J. C. Jain, *op. cit.* pp. 250–51.
2. R. K. Mookerji in *Homage to Vaiśālī*, p. 5.
3. *Mahāvastu*. II, 118.
4. *Mahāparinibbāṇa-Suttanta*, IV. 35.
5. Quoted, R. K. Mookerjee, *op. cit.* p. 5.

the dominating force of the new Order. These slender threads of evidences, when knit together, leave no doubt that Vaiśālī and Videha had been a very prominent centre of Jaina activities long before the rise and spread of Buddhism.

### Socio-religious Condition :

Scholars generally believe that Jainism like Buddhism was borne of discontent and hatred against Brāhmaṇism. The fact, however, remains that the orthodox Brāhmaṇas in general were not so hostile to Jainism as they had been towards Buddhism through out the centuries. Mahāvīra was nodoubt the founder of Jainism as it exists today, but he had been preceded by several *Jinas* of whom Pārśvanātha the twenty - third Tīrthaṅkara and immediate predecessor of Mahāvīra, may at least be said to have been an historical figure. In other words, Jainism was not a revolt in the strict sense of the term against the existing Brāhmaṇical hierarchy. On the other hand, the creed had already originated and spread though it received a great impetus with the advent of Mahāvīra on the scene. Mahāvīra's protest against caste-privileges nodoubt provoked the opposition of the Brāhmaṇas who in turn criticised the Jaina religion and philosophy, but not so militantly and bitterly as they did Buddhism and its philosophy,[1] for the latter had adopted a much more aggressive missionary career than the former. Moreover, Mahāvīra did not criticise the authority of the Vedas so strongly as did the Buddha. Infact, he supported casteism in a way and recognised the status of the *Trivarṇa*, i.e., the Brāhmaṇa, the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya.

The socio-religious condition of North India in the time of Mahāvīra and the Buddha was almost the same. The abuses begotten of the privileges of the caste-system and the monopoly held by the Brāhmaṇas in matters of religion were ultimately responsible for the growth of the deep-rooted institution of priesthood which was vehemently attacked and ruthlessly criticised even by the great Upaniṣadic seers and philosophers including Janaka and Yājñavalkya, the champions of the revolutionary reforms in Brāhmaṇism during the Upaniṣadic period.[1] Indeed, the Brāhmaṇa priests committed excesses in the name of the Yajña-ceremony which gradually became more and more elaborate and involved. They went to such extreme as to unscrupulously call themselves *bhūdevas*, i.e., gods born on the earth.[2] This state of affairs was not destined to continue for long. The appearance of Mahāvīra and the Buddha on the socio-religious scene gave a rude setback to the Brāhmaṇical pretensions and violently shook the society out of its bottom. This anti-Brāhmaṇic revolution, whatever may have been its cause, was certainly an expression of the general ferment of thought fomented and inspired to a great extent by the Kṣatriya protest against the caste exclusiveness of the Brāhmaṇas. This is further corroborated by the fact that "the pioneers of this new system probably drew their suggestions from the sacrificial creed and from the upaniṣads and built their system independently by their own rational thinking."[3]

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[1] For a detailed discussion of this aspect, see the writer's paper, "A Brief Survey of Buddhism and Buddhist Remains in Mithilā" in *JBRS*. ( Buddha Jayanti special Issue, Vol. II ); also see H. L. Jain's paper, "Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture" in *JBRS*. XLV, pp. 1–2.

These social abuses indulged in by the Brāhmaṇas gave Mahāvīra a splendid chance to preach the Dharma of Pārśva after a slight modification. He taught man to look not beyond himself for hope and aid. His teaching proved so effective that even a section of the Brāhmaṇas are said to have recognised him as a great teacher.[4] According to C. V. Vaidya,

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[1] We have elsewhere thoroughly dealt with this aspect (*Ibid*). Also see the writer's book, *History of Mithilā*, pp. 94–97.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] S. N. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 210. For other details see Muni Ratnaprabhā Vijaya, *Śramaṇa Bhagavāna Mahāvīra*, Vol. I, pt. 1. pp. 50–53.

[4] *Kalpa-sūtra* ( *Sukhabodhikā–ṭīkā* ), pp. 112, 18 "प्रभुः अपापापुयां... जगाम, तत्र वहवो ब्राह्मणाः मिलिताः ......चतुश्चत्वारिंशच्छतानि द्विजाः प्रव्रजिताः"

"intellectual Brāhmaṇas also joined the ranks of Jainas as of Buddhists from time to time owing to conviction as well as for honour, and contributed to the maintenance of this reputation of the Jainas for learning.[1]" But Jainism gradually spread among the poor and the lowly as it emerged as a strong protest against caste-privileges. In the eyes of Mahāvīra, the Brāhmaṇas and the Śūdras, the high and the low, were the same. He recognised the Brāhmaṇa not by birth but by proper action or qualification. Accordingly, a low-born Cāṇḍāla, possessing requisite qualifications, could enjoy the highest position in the society. Moreover, Jainism, like Brāhmaṇism, is also based on the same dogmas of the transmigration of soul and seeks for deliverance from the endless succession of rebirth[2]. But it does not agree with the Brāhmaṇic penances and abstinences to achieve it, while it aims at attaining, not union with the Universal spirit, but Nirvāṇa, i.e., absolute release from all bodily forms and activities.[3] This difference is, however, minor and, above all, it is distinguished by its relation to castes. Mahāvīra neither opposed them nor accepted every thing as it were. According to him, men are born in lower and higher castes, determined by their sins or good works in a former existence, but by a life of purity and love, by becoming a spiritual man, every one may attain atonce the highest salvation. In accordance with this doctrine caste made no difference to him and he looked for a man even in the Cāṇḍāla.[4]

Miseries and sufferings of existence beset all alike : there is no escape from them. He, therefore, preached the law of grace for all. Caste-system, according to him, was just circumstantial and it is easy for a spiritual man to break the fetters of this system.[5] The gift of supernormal vision was no mono-

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1. *HMI*, Vol. III, p. 406.
2. *SBE*, XXII, 213.
3. Haribhadra in his *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*, V. 52, says :
   "आत्यन्तिको वियोगस्तु देहादेर्मोक्ष उच्च्यते"
4. *Uttarādhyayana*, XII, 1; *SBE*. XIV. 50 :
   "सोभागकुलसंभूओ······हरिएस बलो······"
5. C. J. Shah, *Jainism in North India*, p. 20.

poly of any order or caste or sex, and in this matter he made no distiction between men and men or between men and women.[1] Further, the Jaina belief has been that a *Jina* must always come from a Kṣatriya or some such noble family. In other words, Mahāvīra though did not support the age-old caste-system, yet did not oppose it so vehemently as did the Buddha which provoked strong reaction from the Brāhmaṇas and culminated in a bitter wordy duel for centuries which was ultimately responsible for the growth and development of Indian logic and philosophy.

## The Age of Logical Disputation :

Coming to the philosophical disputations, it is true, sometimes the Jaina and the Brāhmaṇical philosophers have criticised each other, but this seems more by way of passing reference than deliberate attempt on the part of the philosophers belonging to two different schools. Mahāvīra encouraged his followers in the study of the Pūrvas and in developing their power of reasoning and arguing. From the Buddhist records we learn that there were some able and powerful disputants among the Nirgrantha recluses and lay-disciples.[2] The mediaeval logic was almost entirely in the hands of the Jainas and the Buddhists. For one thousand years, from 600 B. C. to 400 A. D., the Jainas and the Buddhists were fully occupied in questions of metaphysics and religion though there are occasional references to logic in their works of that period. "At about 400 A.D. began an epoch when they seriously took up the problems of logic, and all the texts-books on the Jaina and the Buddhist systems of logic date at or after that time."[3] The scenes of activities of the Jaina logicians belonging to the Śvetāmbara sect were at Ujjainī (Mālwā) and Valabhī (Gujrāt) whereas the Digambaras confined their activities to Pāṭaliputra and Draviḍa including the Karṇāṭaka about the 8th cent. A. D. The *Nyāyāvatāra* of Siddhasena Divākara, dated c. 533 A.D.

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[1] Law, *Mahāvīra*, p. 44.

[2] *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I. 227, 374-75.

[3] Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *Indian Logic : Mediaeval School*, Intro. xviii.

may be said to be the first systematic work on the Jaina logic[1], although the real founders of the mediaeval logic were the Buddhists[2].

Siddhasena Divākara ( c. 533 A. D. ) for the first time laid the foundation of a science called logic ( *Nyāya* ) among the Jainas by compiling a treatise, *Nyāyāvatāra* consisting of 32 stanzas, referred to above. He is also credited by the Jainas with having converted Vikramāditya to the Jaina faith. According to Vidyābhūṣaṇa, he was no other than Kṣapaṇaka, a Jaina sage, who is traditionally known to have been one of the nine gems that adorned the court of Vikramāditya[3].

Samantabhadra ( 600 A. D. ) was another great Jaina logician of Digambara sect who composed the famous commentary on Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra* called *Gandhasti-Mahābhāṣya.* The introductory part is known as *Devāgamastotra* or *Āptamīmāṁsā* which, besides elaborately discussing the logical principles, also presents a review of the contemporary schools of philosophy including the Advaitavāda[4]. The celebrated Maithila philosopher Vācaspati Miśra (I) has also cited *Āptamīmāṁsā* in explaining Śaṁkarācārya's criticism of the Syādvāda doctrine in the *Vedānta-Sūtra*[5]. Samantabhadra is further mentioned by Jina Sena in the *Ādipurāṇa* ( c. 838 A.D, ) and is referred to by Kumārila who was a contemporary of the great Buddhist logician, Dharmakīrti.

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[1] *Ibid.* Intro. xix.

[2] For details see the writer's paper "*Buddhism in Mithilā*" in *JBRS*, Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. II ; Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *op. cit.* —xixxi.

[3] Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *op. cit.* pp. 14–15. In the *Pañcatantra* and other Brāhmaṇical works as well as in the *Avadānakalpalatā* and other Buddhist Sanskrit works the Jaina ascetics are nicknamed as Kṣapaṇaka ( see *Ibid.* p. 15, fn. 1 ).

[4] *Āptamīmāṁsa.* v. 24 : "अद्वैतैकान्तपक्षेपि दृष्टो भेदोविरुध्यते
कारकाणां क्रियायाश्च नैकं स्वस्मात् प्रजायते"

[5] *Bhāmatī* ( Bibliotheca Indica ), p. 458 :
"स्याद्वादः सर्वथैकान्तत्यागात् किंवृत्तचिद्विधेः
सप्तभङ्गनयापेक्षी हेयादेय विशेष कृत"
For further details, see Vidyābhūṣaṇa. *op. cit.* p. 23, fn. 2 & 3.

Akalaṅka or Akalaṅkadeva or Akalaṅkacandra (c. 750 A.D.) was yet another famous Jaina logician belonging to the Digambara sect who wrote a commentary on *Āptamīmāṁsā* known as *Aṣṭa-śatī*, which is supposed to be "a most precious work on the Jaina philosphy[1]." It deals mainly with logic. It is said, once he was involved in a controversy with a Buddhist logician whom he ultimately defeated and discomfitured in a heated debate[2].

Vidyānanda, a Digambara logician of Pāṭaliputra ( c. 800 A. D. ) has been mentioned by the great Hindu philosopher, Mādhavācārya in his *Sarvadarśana-saṁgraha*[3]. In his *Āptamīmāṁsālaṅkṛti*, also known as *Aṣṭasāhaśrī*, an exhaustive sub-commentary on the *Āptamīmāṁsā* he has strongly criticised the doctrines of the Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Vaiśeṣika, Advaita, Mīmāṁsaka, and Saugata, Tathāgata or Bauddha philosophy and has referred to Dignāga, Udyotakara Dhamakīrti, Prajñākara, Bhartṛhari, Śabarasvāmī, Prabhākara and Kumārila.[4]

Prabhācandra ( c. 825 A. D. ) of the Digambara sect in his famous logical treatise, *Prameya-kamala-mārtaṇḍa*, a commentary on *Parīkṣāmukha-sūtra* of Māṇikya Nandi, has referred to and criticised the views of Bhagavāna Upavarṣa, Śabarasvāmī, Bhartṛhari, Bāṇa, Kumārila, Prabhākara, Dignāga, Udyotakara, Dharmakīrti and others.[5]

Mallavādin ( c. 827 A. D. ) of the Śvetāmbara sect was the famous author of a commentary on the Buddhist logical treatise, *Nyāyabindu-ṭīkā* called *Dharmottara-ṭippanaka*. That sometimes there was a bitter clash or wordy duel between the Buddhists and the Jainas is clearly evidenced by a Jaina legend relating to the life of this Jaina philosopher. Accordingly, we are told that Malla was the son of king Śilāditya's sister and was called Vādin or logician as he had, by virtue of his unrivalled debating genius, vanquished the Buddhists in a dispute and had re-established the Jaina faith and brought to its former glory the great figure of Ādinātha on Mount Śatruñjaya ( in Kathiāwar )[1].

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 26.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 26.

[3] Trans. by Cowell and Gough, p. 56.

[4] *Aṣṭasāhaśrī*, Chap. I.

[5] Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *op. cit.* p. 34, fn. 1-3.

The Buddhists apart, often there was a clash among the two sects of the Jainas themselves. We have reference to Pradyumna Suri ( c. 980 A. D. ) of the Śvetāmbara sect, said to have been a very great logician, "who, using sharp logical expressions, made his irrelevant opponents to sweat and thereby to be cured of the fever of pride"[2]. Moreover, from Māṇikya Candra's *Pārśvanātha-caritra* we learn that Pradyumna defeated the Digambaras of Venkapaṭṭa in the presence of the King of that province, and in all he had to his credit, eightyfour triumphs in disputations over his rivals[3].

Abhayadeva Suri ( c. 1000 A. D. ) of the Śvetāmbara sect was yet another eminent logician and author of *Vāda-mahārṇava* (Ocean of Discussions) who is described as "a lion that roamed at ease in the wild forest of books on logic. That the rivers of various conflicting opinions might not sweep away the path of the good, Abhayadeva wrote his *Vāda-mahārṇava*"[4]. We have, however, no reference to any logical disputation that took place between him and the Buddhist and the Hindu logicians, though he has criticised their views in his work.

Deva Suri, also known as Vādipravara ( the foremost of disputants ) of the Śvetāmbara sect and author of the well-known work on logic, *Pramāṇa-naya-tattvālokāṅkāra* had defeated the Digambara Kumuda-Candrācārya in a dispute over the salvation of women[5]—a fact which clearly points to the bitter hostility between the two different sects of the same faith.

Candraprabhā Suri ( c. 1102 A. D. ), the contemporary of Hemacandra Suri ( 1088–1172 A. D. ), was the author of several works on logic, including the *Prameya-ratnakoṣa* and

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1. *Ibid.* p. 34.
2. *Ibid.* p. 35.
3. *Ibid.* p. 36.
4. *Ibid.* p. 37.
5. *Ibid.* p. 38.

*Nyāyāvatāravivṛti.* The latter is an excellent commentary on Siddhasena Divākara's *Nyāyāvatāra* in which he has strongly criticised the views of the Buddhist logicians like Dharmottara, Arcaṭa and others and also the views of Saugata, Naiyāyika, Mīmāṁsaka, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya, Cārvāka, Bauddha, Akṣapāda, Brahmavādi etc. Following him, Nemicandra Kavi ( c. 1150 A. D. ), who is said to have been a great teacher of logic, criticised the views of Kaṇāda, the great Hindu philosopher[1].

Ānand Suri and Amaracandra Suri ( 1093–1150 A. D. ), who were nick-named *Tiger-cub* ( *Vyāghra-śiśuka* ) and *Lion-cub* ( *Siṁhaśiśuka* ) are said to have been two great Jaina logicians[2] whom the celebrated Maithila philosopher, Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya, the founder of the Navya-Nyāya school, has mentioned in his *Tattvacintāmaṇi* under *Siṁha-Vyāghrī-Lakṣaṇa* of Vyāpti.

Haribhadra Suri ( c. 1168 A. D. ) was another famous Śvetāmbara Jaina logician who wrote several treatises on logic including *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya.* In the chapter on *Bauddha-darśana* he has referred to the views of Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, and others. Moreover, the six systems treated by him are ( i ) Bauddha, ( ii ) Naiyāyika, ( iii ) Sāṁkhya, ( iv ) Jaina, ( v ) Vaiśeṣika and ( vi ) Jaiminīya. He is said to have protected the word of the Arhats like a mother by his 1,400 works. He has used the word, *viraha* ( separation or sorrow ) as his mark in the last verse of each of his works. A Brāhmaṇa by birth, he was one of the greatest champions of the Jaina faith, and had sent his two pupils, Haṁsa and Paramahaṁsa as missionaries of the Jaina faith who are said to have been slain in the Bhoṭa country ( Tibet ) by the fanatical Buddhists whom they sought to convert. It was because of the sorrow emanating from their death that he used the word *viraha*[1]. The incident further shows that sometime the wordy duel between the Jainas and the Buddhists culminated in violent bloodshed and deaths on either side.

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[1] *Pārśvanāthacaritra*, ( quoted, *Ibid*, p. 47, fn. 1 ).

[2] Cf. the following verse :

"अस्ताघवाङ्मय पयोनिधिमन्दराद्रि-
मुद्राजुषोः किनमयः स्तुमहे महिम्नः
बाल्येऽपि निर्दलित वादिगजौ जगाद
यौ व्याघ्रसिंह शिशुकाविति सिद्धराजः"

( Quoted, *Ibid*, p. 47, fn. 4 ).

Mallisena Suri ( 1292 A. D. ), in his commentary *Syādvāda-mañjarī* which contains an exposition of the Pramāṇa, Saptabhaṅgīnaya etc., criticised Akṣapāda's theory of *Pramāṇa, Cala, Jāti, Nigrahasthāna* etc. He has also bitterly attacked the doctrines of the Sāṁkhya, Jaiminīya, Vedānta, Yogācāra, Madhyamika, Cārvāka etc. Jñānacandra ( 1350 A. D. ) also criticised the Buddhist logicians including Dignāga and others. Guṇaratna ( 1409 A. D. ), another Śvetāmbara Jaina logician has in his *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya-vṛtti* criticised a host of Buddhist and Hindu logicians including Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, the Maithila philosophers like Akṣapāda, Udyotakara, Vācaspati, Udayana and others. He was followed by Dharmabhūṣaṇa ( 1600 A. D. ) and others who have also refuted the doctrines and views propounded by Buddhist and Hindu logicians[2].

The above account clearly shows that logical disputations among the Jainas and the Buddhists and the Hindus were the order of the day. But it was never so bitter between the Jainas and the Hindus, as it was between the Buddhists and the Hindus which we have dwelt at length in other places[3]. As a matter of fact, the Śramaṇa—Munis (the Jainas) and the Vedic Ṛṣis "continued to flourish through the earlier ages of our history side by side, being more or less equally honoured by the people, inspite of the differences in their ideals and practices[4]". It is true, a certain amount of rivalry and intolerance seems to have developed between the two schools, "as their ideologies became more and more sharply marked, but in the public mind, both the Ṛṣis and the Munis remained objects of reverence, so that gradually the terms

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1. Vide—*Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*, Intro. ( Chowkhamba series, Banaras ).
2. Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–55.
3. Vide–the writer's paper in *JBRS*, Buddha-Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. II, referred to in the preceding pages.
4. H. L. Jain, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

became synonymous and interchangeable" and the Śramaṇas themselves in course of time began to claim that they were really the true Brāhmaṇas[1]. Any way, these disputations proved a great boon to Hindu philosophy as they tremendously helped the growth and development of Indian logic.

## Royal Patronage : A Historical Survey

Though no Aśoka or Harṣa rose to champion the cause of Jainism with missionary zeal and vigour, we have nonetheless, several instances of kings embracing this faith of the Jainas. The Jaina sources suggest that Pārśvanātha himself was the son of one Aśvasena, a king of Kāśī[2]. By virtue of his descent, Pārśva's influence in royal families must have been great and in no way less than during the days of his successor, Mahāvīra.

The *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* and other Jaina canonical works say that Pārśva had a large number of adherents in and about Magadha even in the days of Mahāvīra whose very family was attached to the religion of Pārśva[3]. Mahāvīra had to face some of these adherents and win them over to his reformed church in the sixth cent. B. C.

Like Pārśva, Mahāvīra also belonged to the ruling dynasties of the age. The sixteen *Mahājanapadas* included the eight confederate clans known as Aṭṭhakula of whom the Videhans, the Licchavis, the Jñātrikas and the Vajjis proper were most important. We have already shown above his relations with the Videhans as described in the Jaina Sūtras[4]. Besides the blood relationship, there are certain other indications in the Jaina canonical texts which definitely point to the Videhans taking a living interest in the Jaina church. Nimi ( or Nami or Nemi ) the founder of the Janaka dynasty of Mithilā[5] is represented in the Jaina Sūtras as having embraced Jainism. The *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*[1] says that "Nami humbled himself ; enjoined by Śakra in person, the king of Videha ( Mithilā ) left the house and took upon him *Śramaṇahood*"[2]. Besides, we have already noted above that Mahāvīra had spent six rainy seasons in Mithilā. On the basis of these evidences we can safely conclude that if not all, atleast a section among the Videhas, were ardent followers of this faith.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[2] C. J. Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–83.

[3] *Ibid*, pp. 83–84.

[4] Cf. the *Ācārāṅga-sūtra*, the *Kalpasūtra*, the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* etc.

[5] For other details regarding the Janaka dynasty of Mithilā, see the writer's book, *History of Mithilā*, chap. II.

Besides the Videhans, the Licchavis along with the Jñātrikas must have come directly under the influence of the teaching of Mahāvīra. The cases of Triśalā, Siddhārtha, Cetaka, Cellaṇā and others, cited above, suggest that the Licchavis had a distinct sympathy and respect for the Jainas. Furthermore, Cellaṇā, one of the seven daughters of King Cetaka, was married to Bimbisāra, with the result that both of them became ardent Jainas.[3] And, the other six daughters of Cetaka married to different kings are also said to have been strong supporters and followers of Jainism[4].

Campā, the capital of Aṅga ( modern Bhagalpur ), was yet another important centre of Jaina activities where Mahāvīra spent three rainy seasons and where Vasupūjya, the twelfth Tīrthaṅkara was born and died. There are signs of old and new Jaina temples of both the Digambara and the Śvetāmbara sects built for Vasupūjya and other *Tīrthaṅkaras*[1]. From the *Uvāsagadasāo* and the *Antagaḍadasāo* we learn that there was a temple called Punnabhadda (which we have dealt with in the following lines) at Campā in the time of Sudharman, one of the eleven disciples of Mahāvīra, who succeeded him as the head of the Jaina sect after his death[2]. It is said that the town was visited by Sudharman, at the time of Kuṇika Ajātaśatru who went there barefooted to see the Gaṇadhara outside the city which was again visited by Sudharman's successors[3].

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[1] IX. 61 ; XVIII. 45 ( *SBE*. XIV. pp. 41, 87 ) ; also see, Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 147-69.

[2] IX. 61. We have the following verse :

"नमी नमेइ अप्पाणं सक्खं सक्केण चोइओ
चइऊण गेह चं वेदेहि सामण्णे पज्जुवट्ठिओ"

This Nami or Naminātha has also been identified with Janaka or Mahājanaka II of the Mahājanaka Jātaka ( J. C. Jain, *Life in ancient India as depicted in the Jaina Canons*, p. 372 fn. 5-6, p. 377 ). This view is controversial as the Buddhist texts also claim him to be a follower of Buddhism. For other views, see *Śramaṇa Bhagavāna Mahāvīra*, Vol. I, pt. I., p. 40.

[3] C. J. Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 88 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*

It may thus be rightly said that it was through the ruling dynasty of Vaiśālī or the Licchavis that Mahāvīra got solid support from all directions in his early days, and "it was through them that the religion of Mahāvīra had spread over Sauvīra, Aṅga, Vatsa, Avanti, Videha and Magadha, all of which were the most powerful kingdoms of the time[4]". The Buddhist works, therefore, do not mention Cetaka, though they have a lot to tell us about different aspects of Vaiśālī in general. Jacobi, therefore, rightly suggests that "the Buddhists took no notice of him as his influence......was used in the interest of their rivals. But the Jainas cherished the memory of the maternal uncle and patron of their prophet, to whose influence we must attribute the fact that Vaiśālī used to be a stronghold of Jainism, while being looked upon by the Buddhists as a seminary of heresies and dissent[5]".

The Jaina sources also tell us that like the Videhas and the Licchavis, the Mallas were also devotedly attached to Mahāvīra. The *Kalpasūtra* says that the nine Mallikas or Malla chiefs, like the Licchavis, also observed fast and instituted an illumination to mark the passing away of the great Jina. From the *Antagaḍadasāo* we further learn that the Mallikas, along with the Ugras, the Bhogas, the Kṣatriyas, and the Licchavis went to receive Ariṭṭhanemi or Ariṣṭanemi ( the king of Videha ?), the twenty-second Tīrthaṅkara when the latter had been to the city of Bāravai[1]. And, this was also the case with the Gaṇarājās of Kāśī and Kosala[2]. Bimbisāra, Nandas, Candragupta Maurya, Samprati, Khāravela and other powerful rulers are also represented to have been associated with the Jaina church of Mahāvīra in the successive periods[3].

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[1] Dey, *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, pp. 44–45.

[2] Hoernle, II, p. 2.

[3] C. J. Shah, pp. 94–95.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 99; Dey, *Notes on Ancient Aṅga.*, p. 322; Buhler, *Indian sect of Jainas*, p. 27.

[5] *SBE.* Intro. xiii; C.J. Shah, pp. 99–108.

The late Śuṅga and the early Śaka-Kuṣāṇa periods ( c. 150 B. C. – 100 A. D. ) were remarkable in the history of Vaiśālī as they "marked a phase of affluence and artistic activity on the site"[4] of the Garh area of Basārh as its recent excavation indicates[5]. During the Gupta period it was an important administrative seat, which is proved by the Vaiśālī seals and also by the reference in the epigraphic records of the Guptas. Moreover, the account of Fahien, ( A. D. 399–414 ), its frequent mention in an ancient Chinese source of A. D. 517[6] and the reports of excavations in 1903-04, 1913-14, 1950 ( February ) and since 1958, all refer to Vaiśālī as being a prosperous provincial capital-city during the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries A. D., where followers of all religions lived peacefully. Later it presumably declined either due to the ravages of some invaders or natural calamity or calamities. The Garh area, however, seems to have been "deserted after the late Gupta period, i.e., in c. 600 A. D.[7]".

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[1] Barnett, *The Antagaḍa-dasāo and Aṇuttarovavāiya-dasāo*, p. 36.

[2] For details, see C. J. Shah, pp. 108–111.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 112–86, 204–16 ; also cf. *Report on Kumrahār Excavations*, 1951–52, pp. 10–11.

[4] *Vaiśālī Excavations* ( Krishnadeva & V. K. Mishra ), 1950, p. 3.

[5] A. S. Altekar in *JBRS* ( Buddha Jayanti Special Issue ), Vol. II, p. 506, fn. 8.

[6] Yogendra Mishra, *An Early History of Vaiśālī*, p. 230.

[7] *Vaiśālī Excavations*, 1950, p. 5. This was also the period of the desertion of Pāṭaliputra ( *Kumrahār Excavations*, p. 12. )

Yuan Chwang or Hiuen Tsiang ( A. D. 629–645 ) visited Vaiśālī in the seventh century A. D. and found that the capital-city of Vaiśālī was to a great extent in ruins, but abounded in several hundred *saṁghārāmas* which were mostly dilapidated. The followers of the Nirgranthas ( Jaina ascetics ) were, however, very numerous[1]. Probably this is the last definite reference to the existence of a good Jaina population at Vaiśālī. During the Pāla period we have evidences of certain images of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras being made and honoured here ( c. 750-1200 ) and Jaina writers like Jinasena ( eighth Vikrama era) and Guṇabhadra ( ninth Vikrama era ) knew Kuṇḍapura to be in Videha[2].

During the time of the Guptas, however, a very important event connected with the Jaina history took place, as, it is said, the cononical and other literature of the Jainas was put down in writing during this period. On the basis of this account it can safely be concluded that the Jainas had by this time spread more or less all over India. Moreover, from the sixth century onwards, the inscriptions referring to the Jaina communities become very numerous. Yuan Chwang also records their spread in India and even outside in his accounts. All these show that the Jainas remained an important religious community to be reckoned with in the Indian society during this period and after. It seems, however, that by the 13th and 14th centuries A. D., the influence of the Jainas and the Buddhists had practically become non-existent in North Bihar and the adjoining regions, for we have no mention of the Jaina and the Buddhist followers in the account of Dharmasvāmī, the famous Buddhist traveller (13th cent. A. D.) from Tibet, who refers to Tirhut as a "non-Buddhist kingdom."[3]

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[1] S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. II, 1834, p. 66.

[2] Y. Mishra, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

[3] *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (ed. by G. Roerich), p. 60. For details, see *Supra*, chap. V.

## Jaina Antiquities :

Apart from the literary evidence, we have also numerous remains of Jaina art and architecture scattered all over Northern India. As a matter of fact, "the Hindu art owes to them a great number of its most remarkable monuments. In the domain of architecture in particular they have reached a degree of perfection which leaves them almost without a rival."[1] Though Bihar in general is rich in Jaina antiquities, we have, however, a very few remains in North Bihar which do not help us in presenting a connected history of Jaina art in this part of the country. It is indeed surprising that the modern site of Vaiśālī is entirely devoid of any remains belonging to this religious order. According to Smith, "some ten years ago two statues of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras, one seated, the other standing, were discovered about eight feet below the surface," 500 yards west of Baniyā.[2] T. Block doubts its authenticity: "The only thing I could discover was that two images had been placed inside a mud-hut in the south-western corner of Chakramdās, from where they had been taken away more than ten years ago. Nobody could give me any impression as to what they represented, although the floor of the hut was still pointed out, and Mr. Garrick who refers to them (*ASR*. XVI. 91) tells us that he arrived late in the evening at the village when it was too dark to discern these statues."[3]

We have, however, several references to Jaina antiquities in Vaiśālī and its suburbs in the Jaina literature. The *Uvāsagadasāo*[4] says that the Jñātrikas possessed a Jaina temple, outside their settlement at Kollāga bearing the name of Dūipalāsa. *Ceīya* is the term used for Jaina temple which, according to Hoernle, means "properly the name of a Jaina temple or sacred shrine, but commonly applied to the whole sacred enclosure containing a garden, grove or park (*Ujjaāna, Vana-*

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[1] Guerinot, *La Religion Djaina*, p. 279.

[2] *JRAS*. 1902, p. 282.

[3] *ASI. Report*, 1903-04, p. 87.

[4] Hoernle, i, p. 2.

*saṇḍa* or *Vana-khaṇḍa*), a shrine and attendants' houses."[1] This religious establishment might have been kept up for the accomodation of Mahāvīra on his periodical visits along with his disciples to Kuṇḍapura or Vaiśālī.[2]

Like the Buddhist tradition, the Jaina traditions also refer to the practice of erecting stūpas over the ashes of the Jainas. One such stūpa existed at Vaiśālī, dedicated to the Jaina Muni Suvrata,[3] and another at Mathurā dedicated to Supārśvanātha.[4] Stūpa-worship in Jainism seems have been a predominant feature. The *Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi*[5], while referring to the above stūpa at Vaiśālī, gives the story of the 'Thubha' in illustrations of Parinamika Buddhi. The *Āvaśyaka Niryukti*[6] merely gives the catch-word, 'Thubha' "which shows that the author of the *Niryukti* knew of the stūpa of Muni Suvrata at Vaiśālī".[7] Moreover, recent excavations at Kauśāmbī and Vaiśālī have shown that the so-called Northern Black Polished ware was available in different colours and sometimes painted also. Though we are not very certain about the centre of this technique or the place of its origin, it seems, however, quite probable that it was Magadha[8].

According to some scholars, it would be a mistake to suppose that *Cetiya* in the Buddhist passages of the *Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta*[9] and the *Dīgha Nikāya*[10] referred to funeral mounds or stūpas only of Udena, Sattambaka and others[11]. The Bahuputtikā-cetiyam in the *Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta* may be

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1. *Ibid.*, ii, p. 2, fn. 4. For different interpretations of this term, see U. P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, pp. 43–55.
2. C. J. Shah, p. 106.
3. *Āvaśyaka-Cūrṇi* of Jinadāsa (c. 676 A. D.), pp. 223–27, 567.
4. U. P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 9.
5. *Infra*, fn. 4.
6. Vv. 949–51; *Haribhadra's Vṛtti*, 437; *Āvaśyaka-Cūrṇi*, p. 567.
7. U. P. Shah, *op. cit.* p. 62.
8. *Ibid.* p. 71.
9. Chap. III, Sections 36–37.
10. II. 113. Also see Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, App.
11. U. P. Shah, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

said to be identical with the Caitya of the same name at Viśālā ( Vaiśālī ) and Mithilā referred to in the Jaina *Bhagavatī* and *Vipāka Sūtras*. This Bahuputtikā or Bahuputrikā Caitya was dedicated to a goddess of a name who was a proto-type of the later Buddhist Hārīti. "Some of these Buddhist cetiyas were, therefore, similar to the Pūrṇabhadra Caitya described in the *Aupapātika Sūtra*",[1] called a Yakṣa-āyatana after the well-known ancient Yakṣas, Pūrṇabhadra and Māṇibhadra by Jaina commentators.

The description of this Pūrṇabhadra Caitya, as given in the *Aupapātika Sūtra*[2], supports more or less the interpretations advanced by Hoernle, quoted above. It is said that this Caitya was in the Udyāna or park, called Āmraśālavana, situated to the north-east of the city of Campā. It was very old in age ( *cirātīta* ), recognised by people of the ancient ( *porāṇa* ), famous, praised everywhere, and *jñāta*[3]. It was decorated with an umbrella ( or umbrellas ), banners, bells, flags, *atipatākās* ( flags surmounted on flags ), whisks or brushes of peacock-feathers ( *lamapatthaga* ) and having a railing ( *vitardikā-vedikā* ),......It was sprinkled all over with perfumed water, and garlands were hung; it was odorous with flowers of five colours, and with burning incense of *kālāguru kundurukka* and *turukka*......It was haunted by actors, dancers, experts in mimics ( *viḍambaka* ), ballad-singers, ... lute-players and minstrels. Many people visited the shrine which deserved praise, offerings, worship with sandal-paste etc., gifts, adoration and respect......It deserved a gift of a share from sacrifices......On all sides of it was a big forest-grove ( *vanakhaṇḍa* ) with a central big Aśoka tree ( *a caitya vṛkṣa* ) with a *Pṛthvī-śilā-paṭṭa* under it attached to its stem.[4]

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[1] *Ibid*. p. 55

[2] *Sūtras*, 2–5.

[3] U. P. Shah ( *op. cit*. p. 55 ) is inclined to believe that the term *jñāta* probably means "of the *Jñātṛ* people" of which Mahāvīra was a celebrated scion. The description tends to suggest that it was probably *Dūipalāsa*, built by the Jñātrikas, outside their settlement at Kollāga, referred to above.

[4] For details, see U. P. Shah, *op. cit*. ( section on *Caitya-vṛkṣas* ).

Recently an image of Mahāvīra ( in black basalt stone ) of the Pāla period was discovered at Vaiśālī which is now kept in a modern temple situated to the west of Vaiśālī-garh near a tank. This image is respectfully worshipped in the name of Jainendra by the Jainas who flock there from all over the country[1]. We have reference to another Jaina image discovered in Vaiśālī[2] and many more in recent excavations conducted under the auspices of the K. P. Jayaswal Institute, Patna. Moreover, innumerable clay-sealings and seal-impressions of more than 120 varieties, mostly of unbaked clay were found by Drs. Block, Spooner and others in course of excavations at the site. Jainism undoubtedly had a very great influence in the area during the period to which these relics belong. But no definite evidence of Jaina antiquities can be ascertained on the basis of these huge finds. Besides these, we have no information regarding any other Jaina antiquities discovered in the area in recent times.[3] Jayamaṅgalāgarh ( North Monghyr ) is popularly believed to have been an ancient seat of the Jainas[4], thought we have no definite corroborative evidence, literary or archaeological, to support or reject this traditional view. The Mauryan ruler Samprati is also held by tradition as a great patron of the Jainas and builder of numerous Jaina temples[5], but unfortunately no remains are extant today.

In the case of Bhagalpur district, the ancient Aṅga Deśa ( some portions of which definitely formed parts of ancient

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1. This information was kindly given to me by my friend, Dr. B. S. Verma, Research Fellow, K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna.
2. P. C. Roy Chaudhury, *Jainism in Bihar*, p. 99.
3. My friend Sri Sachchidanand Sahay M. A. formerly Lecture-Guide in the Patna Museum ( now Curator, Museum of the Deptt. of A. I. H. & Arch., Patna University ) informs me that there is not a single piece of Jaina antiquities from North Bihar in the Patna Museum.
4. For the antiquities, history etc. of Jayamaṅgalāgarh, see *G. D. College Bulletin Series*, Nos. 1–4.
5. *Bṛhat-Kalpa-bhāṣya*, vol. III. gāthās 3285–89, pp. 917–21.

Mithilā ) we have a few Jaina antiquities. Mandāra Hill is supposed to be one of the sacred places of the Jainas. It was here that Vasupūjyanātha, the twelfth Tīrthaṅkara attained his nirvāṇa. The top of this hill is a great object of veneration for the Jaina community. The structure is said to have belonged to Śrāvakas or Jainas and one of the rooms still contains a *caraṇa*. A few other Jaina relics were also found on the top of the hill[1].

Karṇagarh hill near Bhagalpur also contains numerous ancient Jaina relics. We have reference to a Jaina Vihāra to the north of the ancient fort. There is no doubt that if large-scale excavations are carried on the hitherto ignored but important sites in North Bihar, Jaina antiquities would be found in large numbers.

Numerous sculptures common to most of the Digambara sites in Central India, Uttara Pradeśa and Bihar dating from C. 900-1200 A. D., have been found but of these we have none from North Bihar. Thousands of Jaina bronzes are found scattered over Western India most of which are related to the miniature paintings of the Western school which flourished in the mediaeval period. Like Rājasthan, Bihar and Bengal had its own school of sculpture and painting known as the Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval sculpture with a slight difference in style among the Bengal and Bihar specimens. The Jaina zone of influence appears to have extended from the southern bank of the Gaṅgā to the western bank of the Bhāgīrathī right upto the northern frontier of the Jungle country of the wild Gonds. All the Jaina images belong to the Digambara sect[2].

**Conclusion :**

Thus from the above discussion, it is clear that while the Buddhists disappeared from India in course of time, Jainism with all its schisms and divisions is nevertheless a living force even now. The fact is that they kept open the doors of their church to lay representatives—a factor which contributed much to the stability of Jainism. Moreover, it adopted a less active missionary career than Buddhism and the followers preferred more secluded sites as their chief centres of worship. It was the result of this seclusion that the Jainas did not incur the terrible wrath of the Brāhmaṇas and as such resisted more successfully the stress of the Brāhmaṇical revival and the Muhammadan persecution under which Buddhism in India ultimately collapsed. According to Tiele, "the toleration extended to them by the Brāhmaṇas, even though they were regarded as heretics, led large numbers of Buddhists to take refuge in their community in the days af persecution"[1]. And, it was this Brāhmaṇic toleration, denied to the Buddhists, that saved the Jainas from perpetual persecution and harassment. As a result of this, Jainism, though confined to a small minority, is yet a living religious force, an article of faith with a section of the people all over the country[2].

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[1] Beglar, *Archaeological Survey of India*, vol. III; Kuraishi, *Ancient Monuments of Bihar & Orissa* ( Section on Bhagalpur ).

[2] For details, see U. P. Shah, *op. cit.* pp. 24-35.

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[1] Quoted, C. J. Shah, *op. cit.* p. 77. Also see H. L. Jain, *op. cit.* pp. 1–13.

[2] For further details, see *Supra*, chap. V. Also see, Upendra Thakur, "A Historical Survey of Jainism in North Bihar" in *JBRS*. Alt. Mem. Vol. 1960.

## CHAPTER IV

# The Rise and Growth of Buddhism

### Introduction :

Sixth century B. C. marks a cardinal epoc in the history of the world. It was remarkable for the spiritual unrest and intellectual ferment in many countries. We had Lao Tzu and Confucius in China ; Permenides and Empedocles in Greece ; Zarathustra in Iran and Mahāvīra and the Buddha in India, who worked upon their inheritance, developed new points of view and announced new religion and philosophy which marked a turning point in the history of human civilisation and thought.

Like other great teachers and reformers of the age, Buddha also utilised the Hindu inheritance to correct some of its expressions. The extremely rigid forms of religious sacrifices and ceremonies of the Brāhmaṇic period evoked a great spiritual unrest and revolt against "formalism and exclusiveness of the Brāhmaṇical system"[1] in the Upaniṣadic age. The expensive sacrifices and ritualism were denounced as "irreligious and foolish" by intellectual stalwarts like Yājñavalkya, Janaka Videha, Ajātaśatru of Kāśī, Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, Aśvapati Kekaya, Uddālaka Āruṇi, Śvetaketu Āruṇeya, Satyakāma Jābāla and Dṛpta Bālāki. The reaction and protest against this worn-out system proved so bitter that Janaka Videha refused to submit to the hierarchical pretensions of the Brāhmaṇas and asserted his right of performing sacrifices without the intervention of the priests. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* denounces the upholders of such sacrifices as "fools and fanatics."[2] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* goes a step further. It addresses those who work in ignorance as "the draught animals of the Devas".[1] The knowledge of Brahman and Ātman was accorded supreme place by the Upaniṣadic seers. A new age dawned, a new wave of thought overtook the Upaniṣadic men.

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[1] Rapson, *Ancient India*, p. 63 ; *HM*, p. 97 ;
G. C. Pande, *The Origins of Buddhism*, p. 309.

[2] 1. 2. 7.

### The Upaniṣads and Buddhism :

But the Upaniṣadic period was also not without its drawbacks. The general spirit underlying the Upaniṣads may broadly be described as the search for truth in life. The sage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* upon reflection, finds that "all we can say about God is negative—it is not this, it is not that," and the doctrine that the Self is yet essentially unknowable through the ordinary avenues of knowledge presents a puzzle, first started by Yājñavalkya, and has since then remained engrained in the Vedānta philosophy of a later age which found in Śaṁkara one of its most powerful exponents[2].

Scholars generally agree that Buddhism was but a natural reaction of this stiff and high philosophy of the Upaniṣads which was quite unintelligible to the ordinary minds. It was as such absolutely cut off from the ordinary mass and became an exclusive property of the few. Popular discontent grew and began to seek some outlet elsewhere. The leaders of Hinduism had thus themselves prepared the ground which proved very fertile for the new religion—Buddhism to thrive on. This is all the more remarkable, for Buddhism originated in the same region to which we have to allot the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, for instance, the country of the Videhas, the Kosalas and the Śākyas. Moreover, the doctrine promulgated by Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* are in fact more or less Buddhistic[3]. The result was that with the advent of the Buddha and Buddhism, the Brāhmaṇical religion or the religion of the Vedas was, for the time being, pushed into

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1. VIII. 10 ; G. C. Pande, *op. cit.* pp. 313 ff. The term 'Devas' is here used in the sense of wise men.
2. *HM*, pp. 98–104 ; *2500 years of Buddhism*, Chap. II ; G. C. Pande, *op. cit.* chap. VIII.
3. *HM*, p. 105 : G. C. Pande, *op. cit.*, chap. IX, pp. 327–29.

oblivion and confined to a small section of the people. At the time of the rise of Buddhism, however, the worship of the popular deity *Śrī* or *Siri*, the goddess of luck, of plenty success; spirits of the earth and the great mountains; the Four Great Kings ( *Digpāla* or guardians of the four quarters ); tree-worship; serpent-worship; river-worship etc. were prevalent. The mass of the people believed in age-old spells, incantations, charms and spirits. The religion of the mass was, therefore, purely animistic[1].

Buddha vehemently denounced these heretical views of the time as "fruitless." Though there was a real and progressive civilisation and ideas and customs were no doubt changing and throwing, there was a certain dead level, if not a complete absence of philosophic thought. Then suddenly and almost simultaneously there is evidence about the sixth century B. C. in each of these centres of civilisation "of a leap forward in speculative thoughts, of a new birth in ethics, of a religion of conscience."[2] Brāhmaṇism had by now become "an island in a sea"[3] and majority of the people followed the new order.[4]

## Mithilā and Vaiśalī :

Vaiśālī, the capital-seat of the Licchavi republic (which also included the sacred land of the Videhas) was the first to become the stronghold of both Buddhism and Jainism. The Buddha loved Vaiśālī and the Licchavis so much that he paid atleast three visits to the city. The Vajjis sought his help on many occasions for the solution of their problems. As a matter of fact, the confederacy of the Vajjians in Eastern India looked up to him as adviser on critical occasions in national politics.[5] From the king in the palace to the beggar in the street, from the most serious man of the day to the notorious boys in the

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1. *K. B. Pathak Comm.* Vol. pp. 76–79 ; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 144 ff.
2. *Buddhist India*, pp. 155–56.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *HM*, p. 148.
5. Sarkar, *Creative India*, p. 26.

field all listened to him in reverence and paid their worshipful obeisance.[1]

Notwithstanding this influence and veneration, a great body of the people of the Vajji country stuck to their ancient faith. Buddhism, as we know, at this early stage was a form of faith for ascetics only, not a religious creed for all people. The Buddhists formed only one of the many ascetic sects of Northern India. The Vedic religion was still in full vigour in North-eastern India as the references to Vedic sacrifices in Buddhist texts show. The Vedic gods—Indra, Prajāpati or Brahmā were still popular deities in the regions where the Buddha preached.[2]

Against this changing social and religious background it is claimed that inspite of the great popularity of the Buddha and his new creed, Mithilā, the land of the Videhas, could successfully ward off the so-called pernicious influence of this new Order, and that the atmosphere of the Hindu Society in general was quite calm, peaceful and devotional.[3] The claim does not seem fully justified, for we know that Mithilā and Vaiśālī in ancient times formed a single and inseparable geographical entity.[4] It was a well-marked natural region which is frequently referred to in the Buddhist and Jaina texts. Videha is often used in a wider sense to include Vaiśālī also. The upsurge of new ideas and social convulsions in one part, therefore, almost enevitably affected the other parts of the country.

That the land of the Videhas was markedly influenced by the new Order is manifest from the numerous references contained in ancient literature. Manu brands the Videhas, like

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1. *HM*, p. 150 ; also cf. *Homage to Vaiśālī* ( Ed. Y. Mishra and J. C. Mathur ), pp. 85–90.
2. Law, *Some Kṣatriya Tribes*, pp. 69 ff, 149.
3. Mishra, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 333 ; *Mithilāṅka* ( *Mithilā-Mihira* ), 1935, pp. 81–82. Also see his article in *JGNJRI*. ix. pt. i, pp. 111 ff.
4. *HM*, pp. 2–3 ; *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, II; 15, 17 ; *SBE*. XXII, Intro.

the Licchavis, as Vrātyas.[1] According to him; "the offspring of a Vaiśya father and Brāhmaṇa mother is a Videha, a native of Videha. They live by guarding the harems of kings. The duties assigned to them are charge of bolts and bars for protecting the privacy of women of respectable house-holders."[2] The Videhas, it seems, were not held in high esteem because of the chastening of the caste-rules caused by the spread of Jainism and Buddhism. Moreover, the classification of the Videhas (and the Licchavis) as Vrātyas[3] (the impure castes) is a sign that Manu's book is long pesterior to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* where the Videhas appear as the leading representatives of Brāhmaṇism. The position allotted to this tribe may perhaps further be connected with the fact that "the Videhas (and specially the Licchavi family of them) exercised material influence on the growth of Buddhism."[4] It is further corroborated by evidence from Buddhist sources wherein we are told that most of the later Videhan monarchs were too much influenced by Buddhism to take up arms against their enemies with the result that like the successors of Aśoka in a later age, they were also unable to face any external invasion whatsoever. Their detached outlook towards and complete renunciation of the world is said to have chiefly accounted for the deterioration that gradually set in the mighty fabric of the Videhan kingdom resulting in its complete collapse.[5]

The Jātaka-stories also refer to many Videhan kings turned ascetics. We have mention of a Videhan king, Janaka Janadeva who is said to have given up his hundred teachers and followed Pañcaśikha, the first disciple of Āsurī.[6] The *Nimi Jātaka*[7] says that a certain king, Makhādeva ruled over Mithilā and renounced the world at the later stage of his life. After him came Nimi who was "born to round off" the family "like a hoop of a chariot-wheel." His son was Karāla or Kalāra Janaka who also renounced the world and brought this family to an end.[1] There was another king, Sādhīna whose virtues and goodness were praised by all.[2] Infact, an all-round attempt was made to re-interpret the word "Brāhmaṇa" in a spiritual manner and besides the lower castes, many Brāhmaṇas joined the new Order[3].

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[1] *Manu*, x. 22.

[2] *Ibid*. x. 11, 17, 19, 26, 33 & 47; *Gautama*, IV. 17; Barnett, *Antiquities of India*, p. 133.

[3] For the Vrātyas, see R. K. Chaudhary's forthcoming publication, *The Vrātyas in Ancient India*.

[4] Weber, *History of Indian Literature*, pp. 276-77, 284-85.

[5] *HM*, pp. 60 ff.

[6] Pargiter, *AIHT*, p. 329.

[7] No. 541; Fausball, VI. 96.

But, barring western Mithilā, Buddhism in its later phase does not seem to have gained strong foothold in Mithilā proper. It is no doubt true that the first popular wave of Buddhism shook the entire country out of its bottom, and that the spread of the new Order passed more or less unchallenged as an accomplished fact. But, when the followers of Buddhism began to attack the ancient Vedic traditions right and left with their arguments borne out of jealousy and hatred, the Maithila scholars shook off their complacency, essayed and reinforced the tottering edifices by taking up the new challenge in its letter and spirit. They bade good-bue to their spiritual pursuits for the time being and concentrated their entire energy on the preservation of their ancient culture and tradition[4]. This ushered in a new era of logical disputations and it may rightly be said that the bitter clash between these two conflicting currents of thought for ages was ultimately responssible for the tremendous growth of and unprecedented advance in Indian logical system.) If Magadha was the birth-place of Buddhist logic, Mithilā was similarly the citadel of Brāhmaṇic philosophy[5].

This strong Brāhmaṇic reaction and opposition to the new Order seems to have dangerously influenced and demoralised the Vajji followers of the great Master, immediately after his death. The Second Council at Vaiśālī is a significant pointer to it. It is said that only a hundred years after the passing away of the Master, the *Vajjiputtaka Bhikṣus* and the residents of Vaiśālī indulged in practices utterly prejudicial and detrimental to the interest of Buddhism. They proclaimed "ten indulgences" as permissible[1]. Thereupon the Buddhist Elders convened a Council at Vaiśālī known as the *Sattasatika* or the Convocation of the Seven Hundred, with a view to suppressing the heresies among them ( the *Vajjiputtakas* ). The assembled Bhikṣus were brought together by venerable Yaśa. The "ten indulgences" were throughly enquired into and a judgment of suppression was finally announced. But the following century again witnessed schisms in the Buddhist clan—this time too wide to be bridged, with the result that within a few hundred years, Buddhism, ironically enough, was wiped off the very land of its inception[2].

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Sādhīna J.* No. 494.

[3] G. C. Pande, *op. cit.* p. 391 : Also cf. Buddhaghoṣa's Pali Comm. *Param-attha-Jotikā*, pp. 156–65; *HM*, pp. 63–66.

[4] Mishra. *op. cit.* p. 490.

[5] Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana in *Mithilāṅka*, p. 11.

**Royal Patronage :**

Aśoka's patronage contributed much to the spread of Buddhism within the empire and outside, but he too could not meet the Brāhmaṇic reaction effectively. According to some writers, the Buddhist priests from Magadha and Tirhut ( Vaiśālī ) went in large numbers to preach their religion to Tibet during his time[3]. Nonetheless, the orthodox Maithilas seem to have been adamant in their anti-Buddhistic attitude, and one of the causes leading to the fall and break-up of the Magadhan empire was no doubt the violent Brāhmaṇic reaction[4].

The following period saw the recrudescence of Brāhmaṇic learning and culture under Śuṅga monarchs. Buddhism now lost official patronage and was replaced by Brāhmaṇism. From the Buddhist account it is clear that Puṣyamitra Śuṅga was a persecutor of the Buddhists. A champion of militant Brāhmaṇism, he revived and re-established the ancient priestly traditions by performing two aśvamedha sacrifices[1].

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[1] Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 103 ; *JABS*. vi. p. 728 : *HM*, pp. 63-66.

[2] *HM*, p. 151. For details see *2500 years of Buddhism*, pp. 41-44.

[3] *HM*, p. 172, *JBRS*. xxxviii. pp. 351-52.

[4] For different views see, *PHAI*, pp. 354-61.

The famous Indo-Greek king Menander was also a Buddhist and his name is associated with the well-known Pāli work, *Milindapañho* or *Questions of Milinda.* This is one of the standard works on Buddhist Philosophy in which figures the great Buddhist philosopher, Nāgasena[2].

Gautamīputra Śātakarṇī, though himself a Hindu, made liberal grants and donations to the Buddhist institutions which is evident from the literary and artistic works of the period.

Kaniṣka's reign is a land-mark in the history of Buddhism. A great patron of Buddhist religion, he also associated himself with a galaxy of Buddhist masters who shaped Buddhism in later times. It was in this period that the Indo-Greek School of Buddhist art, *i.e.*, the Gāndhāra School, achieved its greatest development. Moreover, a new form of Buddhism, the Mahāyāna, of far-reaching consequence, also came to be evolved at the same time, and the third Great Council was also convened durind his reign. He is further credited with having carried off the famous alms-bowl of the Buddha from Vaiśālī in or about the first cenury A. D.[3]

The advent of the Gupta dynasty also gave a new impetus to Buddhism. Although Bhāgavatas by faith, the Gupta monarchs were sympathetic towards the cause of Buddhism. A number of important inscriptions beginning from the fifth century A. D. till the end of the sixth, and a large number of records by the Chinese pilgrims and others from the middle of the seventh century A. D. throw a good deal of light on the condition of Buddhism in this period. It had reached its height in extent; the great centres of Buddhist study like Nālandā and Valabhī were still keeping the light burning vigorously and Harṣa's conversion to Mahāyāna Buddhism lit the flames once again. But, nowhere is it mentioned that these zealous champions of Buddhism succeeded in converting the orthodox section of the Brāhmaṇas to their faith. On the other hand, the wordy war between the protagonists of the two systems was still going on in full vigour, and evidences tend to show that Buddhism, unable to bear the Brāhmaṇic onslaughts, defeated and discomfitured, was gradually retreating from the very land of its birth, and was sooner or later confined to Kashmir, Swāt Valley, Valabhī and other places on the north in a none-too prosperous condition.[1]

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[1] *HM*, p. 151. For details, see 2500 *years of Buddhism*, pp. 41–44.

[2] For other details, see Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, 1923, pp. 45 ff.

[3] *Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.* xvi. pp. 8–11 ; *JRAS.* 1913. pp. 627–50 ; 403–10, 748–51 ; 1915, pp. 95–108 ; *HM*, p. 181.

Even during the time of Harṣa, the Great Order with all its royal patronage, omitted certain dangerous symptoms of decay. Yuan Chwang's accounts leave us in no doubt that some thing had gone terribly wrong with the vast religious empire reared up by the genius and life-blood of the Buddha. In 635 A. D. the pilgrim visited Tirhut (Mithilā and Vaiśālī) and found Buddhism waning in that region.[2] On the other hand, Jaina Digambaras were in a large number at Vaiśālī, Puṇḍravardhana and Samataṭa. Brāhmaṇism had asserted its complete supremacy with its strongholds at Mithilā, Kāśī and Prayāga during this time which is evident from Yuan Chwang's reference to India as the "the country of the Brāhmaṇas"[3] *(Po-lo-men-kuo)* as well as Bāṇa's mention of the "followers of Kapila, Kaṇāda and Upaniṣads, i.e., Vedāntins"[4].

The century that followed Harṣa's death dealt a death-blow to the already decaying religion in Vaiśālī, Videha and its neighbouring tracts. If the story of conflict between Arjuna, Harṣa's minister and the usurper of Tirhut after his master's death and the combined attack of the Tibetan and Nepalese forces, as told in the Chinese records, is to be believed, it is natural to conclude that Buddhism by this time had become a dead force, without any sign of life whatever, in these regions.

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[1] For details, see 2500 *years of Buddhism*, pp. 64 ff.

[2] Rhys Davids, *Travels of Yuan Chwang*, ii, pp. 63–80.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*

It is said that Arjuna or Aruṇāśva, just after Harṣa's death, insulted and injured the second Buddhist Chinese mission of Wang-hiuen-tse. The latter thereupon fled to Nepal and returned with a large army consisting of 1200 picked Tibetan soldiers supplied by the Tibetan king Srong-btsan-gampo and supported by a Nepalese contingent of 7,000 horsemen. The combined army stormed Tirhut and the horrible cruelty and rapaciousness with which the Chinese envoy massacred the inhabitants of Tirhut reflect little credit on a Buddhist mission. The account as given in the Chinese records, seems to be a highly exaggerated one and reads more like romance than a piece of sober history. What, however, seems to be true is that after Harṣa's death, Arjuna, a petty Brāhmaṇa governer of Tirhut asserted independence and insulted the Buddhist mission probably because of his inherent hatred towards them. Full of revenge, the envoy with the combined support of the Tibetan and the Nepalese kings ( who were also strong adherents of Buddhism ) attacked the Brāhmaṇic chief, defeated him and massacred the Brāhmaṇic inhabitants of Tirhut.[1] We have yet another instance of a sanguinary fight between the Buddhists and the Brāhmaṇas recorded in a popular Maithila tradition which suggests that the opponents of the systems, when unable to meet the viewpoints of one another, often exchanged pen for the sword. It is said that after the Great Bhārata battle, Kṣatriyas, the traditional defenders of Brāhmaṇic faith, became too weak to arrest the influence of anti-Brahmaṇic faith. The Brāhmaṇas, therefore, retired to the Abu mountains and performed sacrificial rites there with the result that out of the fire-pit were born great Kṣatriya families–the Paramāras, the Cauhānas, the

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[1] For details, see *JASB*. vi, p. 69; iv, p. 20; Tripathi, *History of Kanauj*, pp. 189–90; *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British, Foreign, India, China and Australia*. 1836, pp. 220–21; *IHQ*. III. p. 792; *HB*, I, pp. 91–93; *JRAS*, 1880, pp. 528 ff; *JIH*, xxxii; *HM*, pp. 198–200; *EHI*, pp. 366–67; *DHNI*, I, p. 274, *Le Nepal*, ii, pp. 174–75; *JMOS*, 1911, p. 133 ; *JBORS*, xxii, pp. 161 ff; *Antiquities of Tibet*, II, p. 82; *IHQ*, xv. (suppl). pp. 59-62

Solaṅkīs and the Parihāras. Of these the Paramāras were represented by Vikramāditya, the great legendary figure and ruler of Ujjain who had extended his kingdom upto Mithilā. As to his conquest of Mithilā, it is said, there took place a great philosophical disputation between the Buddhist and the Maithila scholars at Harihara-kṣetra in which the lattter were insulted by the former who had the support of the Nepalese king ruling over the tract. This greatly infuriated the Maithila Paṇḍitas who sent Jayāditya Miśra, son of the celebrated Vararuci Miśra, to represent their case before Vikramāditya, the new defender of Brāhmaṇic faith. Incidentally they met each other in the Mahākāla Śiva Temple on the bank of the Śiprā river at the time of performing worship to the great God[1]. Having thus acquainted himself with the actual state of affairs, Vikramāditya mobilised his forces, swooped down upon Mithilā, conquered the land and the adjoining territories and chased the Buddhists out of its boundaries. The Gandhavariyā Rājaputs of Mithilā even now trace their descent from the said Vikramāditya[2]. Whatever the credulity of the legend, or otherwise, the fact remains that the wordy war and mutual hatred and jealousy between the adherents of the two systems had reached such a dangerous point that it often culminated in violent bloodshed and massacres—a fact which finds echo in later Brāhmaṇical works, for instance, Udayana's writings, Jyotirīśvara's *Varṇana-Ratnākara* etc. dealt with elsewhere in the following pages.

In Sind, Buddhism had degenerated from the sublimest philosophy to the vilest superstition whereas in Kashmir it was gradually supplanted by Hinduism, though temples of the Buddha were also raised. King Avantivarman had Buddhist leanings. In Orissa, however, Buddhism continued to be a dominant religion upto the end of the fifth century A. D. The modern Vaiṣṇavas of Orissa are crypto-Buddhists professing a faith which is a later development of the Mahāyāna system. Similar was the case of Bengal where Buddhism gradually degenerated into a number of cults. The Haihayas were the first Buddhists but they changed their religion in the eighth century A. D. In south India also, the earliest Pallavas of the Prakrit records were Buddhists. The Pallava ascendancy no doubt witnessed the decline of Buddhism but they were tolerant to other sects and made grants to the Buddhists. Under the Vākāṭakas and the Cālukyas of Bādāmī Buddhism influenced a considerable section of the population.

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[1] For the so-called dialogue between Jayāditya Miśra and Vikramāditya, and other details, see P. Jhā, *Mithilā-tattva-vimarśa*, pp. 95-96.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 96.

While Buddhism was thus slowly disappearing from the land of its birth, it witnessed another great, though temporary, revival under the patronage of the Pāla monarchs. Most of these rulers were devout Buddhists and innumerable pieces of art of this period have been discovered in Mithilā and elsewhere. These Pāla kings were also responsible for new endowments to the Nālandā monastery and for the foundation of new monasteries such as Vikramaśilā, Odantapurī and Somapurī[1], which dominated the whole of the Buddhist world nearly for six centuries, from the sixth to twelfth century A. D. *i.e.*, till the advent of the Muslims, when the conquests of Bakhtyār Khilji in Eastern India ( Bihar and Bengal ) put finish to this long, long story[2].

## The Age of Logical Disputation :

Coming to the scholarly and logical disputations between the followers of Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism, we find that the exponents of these systems wrote numerous books refuting the views of their opponents. The thinkers of these schools were accustomed often to meet together and defeat their rivals in actual debates. The result of these wordy wranglings frequently proved very important in determining the prestige of a school of thought. For example, if a Buddhist logician defeated a greater Nyāya or Mīmāṁsā thinker in a great public debate, attended by learned scholars from every part of the country, his fame at once spread all over the country and he could also secure a large number of followers on the spot. This debating spirit was also largely responsible for the extensive tours of disputation undertaken by great masters for the sole purpose of defeating the teachers of the opposite school and of securing adherents to their own. "These debates were, therefore, not generally conducted merely in a passionless philosophical mood with the object of arriving at the truth but in order to inflict a defeat on opponents and to establish the ascendancy of some particular school of thought"[1]. Advanced Sanskrit philosophical works criticise these debators by exposing their inconsistencies over self-contradictions. As a matter of fact, all the resources of the art of controversy find full play for silencing the opponent before the final philosophical answer is given.[2]

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[1] *2500 years of Buddhism*, pp. 175 ff.

[2] *Ibid*. Also cf. Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana, *Buddha-caryyā*, Intro. 11; R. K. Chaudhary, *Siddhārtha*, pp. 187–208.

Thus, it was in the wake of this new trend of debating and speculative currents and cross-currents in the world of intellect that the systematization of Nyāya in the Sūtra form was completed by Gautama or Akṣapāda during this period of intellectual turmoil and unrest[3]. Sūtra work now gave prominence to categories, like Discussions, Disputation, Wrangling, Fallacies, Casuistry, Futile rejoinder and Clinchers. Infact, the sixteen categories elaborated by Gautama in his *Nyāyasūtra*[4] clearly tend to show that there was a definite motive, a mercenary zeal, not detached scholarly view, behind presenting all these systematizations and enumerations. The entire system seems to have been motivated by the sole purpose of meeting the opponents in controversies to refute the rivals' arguments, assert one's view-point through logical dissertations and lastly to guard one's own views against the wrong reasoning of the rivals[5].

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[1] S. N. Das Gupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. pp. 406–07.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 407.

[3] Mishra, *op. cit.* p. 491.

[4] I. I. I. For the date and authenticity of *Nyāyasūtra* and its enumeration of 16 subjects, see Dasgupta, *op. cit.* 1. pp. 277–301.

[5] Mishra, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

It is thus likely that the earliest beginnings of Nyāya are to be found in the disputations and debates amongst scholars trying to find out the right meanings of the Vedic texts for use in sacrifices and also in these disputations which occurred between the adherents of different schools of thought aiming at defeating and discomfituring one another. Such disputations took place in the age of the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads[1] and the art of disputation was regarded even then as a subject of study[2].

The *Nyāyasūtra* of Gautama, therefore, forms a landmark in the history of Indian logic. Vātsyāyana wrote a commentary on it about 320 A.D., known as *Vātsyāyanabhāṣya*[3]. Udyotakara, the great Maithila logician, wrote a *Vārttika*[4] on Vātsyāyana's *bhāṣya*, about 635 A. D. with a view to establishing the Nyāya view and refuting the criticisms of the great Buddhist logician, Dignāga (c. 500 A.D.) in his *Pramāṇa samuccaya.* The celebrated Vācaspati Miśra I ( 840 A. D. ) wrote a sub-commentary on the *Nyāya-vārttika* of Udyotakara, called *Nyāyavārttika-tātparya-ṭīkā* in order to make clear the right meanings of Udyotakara's *Vārttika* which was "sinking in the mud as it were through numerous other bad writings"[5]. He also wrote his celebrated commentary, *Bhāmatī* on Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* in which he has referred to the Buddhist doctrine of *Pratītya-samutpāda*[6]. He has also quoted from Dignāga in his *Tātparyaṭīkā*[7] and strongly refuted his views on the contact of sense-organ. In addition to these works, the *Nyāya-mañjarī* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa ( 880 A. D. ) is most important in mediaeval times. Jayanta flourished shortly after Vācaspati and has discussed the Nyāya views quite independently, criticising the views of other systems, particularly the Buddhist[1].

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[1] Vide–The conference of scholars at the court of Janaka Videha at the time of horse-sacrifice ( *Śat. Brā.* xiv. 6. 1–4 ; *Bṛh. up.* III. 5 ).

[2] Dasgupta, *op. cit.* i. p. 276.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 306–07.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 307.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 307 ( *dustarakunibandhapaṅkamagnānām* ).

[6] *Bhāmatī.* 11. ii ; Dasgupta, i, p. 418.

[7] 1. i. 4 ; Mishra, *op. cit.* p. 479.

Udayanācārya or Udayana ( 984 A. D. ), the great Maithila philosopher, was a militant champion of the Brāhmaṇic faith, and he bitterly criticised and mercilessly attacked the Buddhists on all fronts[2]. He wrote a sub-commentary on Vācaspati's *Tātparyaṭīkā*, called *Tātparyaṭīkā-pariśuddhi*.[3] He was also the author of the famous work, *Nyāya-kusumāñjali*[4] in which he has tried to prove the existence of God whom the Buddhists openly denied and criticised in their arguments. This work ought to be read with its sub-commentary, *Prakāśa* by Vardhamāna ( 1225 A. D. ) and its sub-commentary, *Makaranda* by Rucidatta ( 1275 A. D. ), both Maithila scholars. But his uncompromising stand against, and pernicious attack on the Buddhists find echo in his *Ātmatattvaviveka*, also known as *Bauddhādhikkāra* or *Bauddhādhikāra*, a polemical work against the Buddhists, in which he has tried to establish the Nyāya doctrine of Soul[5]. In his crusade against them he is even said to have challenged the Lord Jagannātha, who is regarded as the incarnation of the Buddha[6].

It is interesting to note that between the *Vātsyāyanabhāṣya* and Udyotakara's *Vārttika* no Hindu work of importance on logic seems to have been written. We may, therefore, safely infer that non-Buddhist Naiyāyikas, during this period, probably proved incapable of resisting the great onrush of Buddhist thought and putting up any hard fight against the Buddhist logicians, and as such the science of logic was entirely in the

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1. Dasgupta, i. p. 307.
2. Mithilā-tradition records that in the beginning Udayana was so scared of Buddhist influences that he left Mithilā, went over to Bengal and became *Dharmādhikaraṇika* in the court of the legendary Bengali king Ādiśūra ( P. Jhā, *op. cit.* p. 106 ). The tradition, however, lacks corroboration from other sources.
3. Dasgupta, i. p. 307.
4. *Ibid.* p. 307 ; *Mishra. op. cit.* p. 500.
5. *Ibid.* p. 307 ; *Ibid.* p. 500.
6. For details, see *Supra*, chap. II.

hands of the Jainas and the Buddhists. The real founders of mediaeval logic, however, were the Buddhists[1].

It was in fact Dignāga's criticism of Hindu Nyāya in general and that of *Vātsyāyana-bhāṣya* in particular that aroused Udyotakara to write the *Vārttika*. Had there been any Maithila or other outstanding Hindu logician in this intervening period, Udyotakara would not have proclaimed in the beginning verse of his *Nyāyavārttika* : "This treatise is being written by me for the purpose of removing the blemish of error cast by inferior logicians (namely Dignāga and others) upon these doctrines which the chief of sages, Akṣapāda propounded for peace and welfare of the world"[2].

Besides Dignāga, there flourished another great Buddhist thinker, Jñānaśrīmitra before Udayana. He hailed from Gauḍa and had a high place of honour among the scholars in Vikramaśilā as the second *Mahāstambha* ( great pillar ) among the gatekeeping scholars of the Vikramaśilā *Mahāvihāra*. The great Atīśa is said to have sought his advice on esoteric matters before his departure for Tibet. His work, *Kāryakāraṇabhāvasiddhi* is still preserved in Tebetan translation. A number of his works brought from Tibet[3] show how he criticised Vācaspati and what provoked Udayana to write his *Nyāyavārttikatātparyapariśuddhi* or *Bauddhādhikāra*. He belonged to the school of *Āryamaitreyanāthapāda* which was successively strengthened by Vasubandhu, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* was the basis of three different schools, and Jñānaśrī belonged to the religious school started by Prajñākaragupta, the author of the *Pramāṇavārttikabhāṣya.* That he was a great thinker is evident from the fact that he has left his influence on all the three branches of Indian logic, Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina. He has spared no pains to refute the views of Śaṁkara, Bhāsvarajña, Trilocana and Vācaspati I. Udayana, Gaṅgeśa, Śaṁkaramiśra, and Mādhavācārya have quoted from his works and often criticised his views. Ratnakīrti, the Buddhist philosopher, quotes him as an authority on *Tarkabhāṣya* and the Jaina logician Vādi Reva quotes him several times in his work[1].

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[1] Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *Indian Logic* : *Mediaeval School*, Intro, xix–xxi. For detailed discussion, see the author's paper, "A Brief Survey of Buddhism and Buddhist remains in Mithilā" in *JBRS* (Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. II ) ; *Supra*, chaps. IV and III.

[2] Quoted Mishra, *op. cit.* pp. 491–92.

[3] Mahāpaṇḍita Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana brought the photo-prints of palm-leaf manuscripts of works in original Sanskrit in course of his pilgrimages to Tibet which are now preserved in the Bihar Research Society, Patna. Jñānaśrī's works are in all twelve ( Vide–Anantalal Thakur, "Jñānaśrīmitra and his works" in *JBRS*, Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. I, pp. 186 ff. )

But, the Buddhist and Jaina method of treating logic separately from metaphysics as an independent study was not accepted by the Hindus till we come to Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya with whom the new school of Nyāya philosophy, known as *Navya-Nyāya,* started about 1200 A. D.[2]

The most important Buddhist logician, after Dignāga and before the rise of the great Śaṁkara and Maṇḍana Miśra, who dominated the scene was Dharmakīrti ( c. 635 A. D. or 7th century A. D. ), the famous author of *Nyāya-bindu,* a Sautrāntika doctrine of Buddhism or the Sautrāntika theory of inference. He has been referred to by great logicians like Vācaspati Miśra I, Jayanta, Śrī Harṣa, Śālikanātha Miśra, Pārthasārathi Miśra and several other later logicians. He was the celebrated author of several original works and commentaries. Of these the most important is his *Pramāṇavārttika,* a commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* in which he has sharply criticised the views of Udyotakara ( *Nyāyavārttika* ) and Kumārila ( *Ślokavārttika* ). In his writing of this *Vārttika* he was undoubtedly influenced by Udyotakara as his first verse is quite in tune with the beginning verse in Udyotakara's *Vārttika.* Moreover, it reads like a counter-reply to Udyotakara who has criticised Dignāga as an inferior logician. Dharmakīrti says : "Ordinary person of weak intelligence not only shows his indifferences to the good work (of Dignāga) but is malicious, envious, and jealous towards it. Therefore, it was not of great use. Thinking it so with my aptitude developed with the long and continuous study of the good work, I undertake the present one"[1]. But, inspite of his vigorous defence of Buddhism, euridite learning and vast scholarship, it seems, he did not receive as much recognition as was his due. From a verse attributed to Dharmakīrti in the *Sadūkti-karṇāmṛta* by Śrīdhara Dāsa[2] it is clear that he felt more or less ignored by his contemporaries for, in the last verse of his *Pramāṇavārttika* he mournfully says : "My view whose path has not been reached by the capacity of mighty intelligent brains, whose correct sense has not been grasped even with great efforts, and which has not found in this world an appreciator befitting it, will, like water ( which is absorbed and lost ) in the ocean attain old age and will perish in my own person"[3].

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[1] For details, see *Ibid.* pp. 191–92.

[2] Dasgupta i. pp. 309–10; For details regarding this new school of logic, see M.M. Chakrabarty's paper, "*History of Navya-Nyāya*" in *JASB.* 1915 ( N. S. ) ; Mookerjee, *AIE,* p. 597 ; *HM,* pp. 376–78, *Supra,* chap. II ; *History of Navya-Nyāya in Mithilā* etc.

From the above it is clear that Dharmakīrti was not at all happy over the existing state of affairs. The revival of the orthodox Hindu ideals under the dynamic leadership of Udyotakara, Kumārila ( a contemporary of Dharmakīrti[4] ) and others and the encouragement and support that it slowly received from the people in general may have largely been responsible for the gradual withering away of Buddhist influences and ideals which led Dharmakīrti to give expression to such disappointing utterances in seer mental agony. According to Stcherbatsky, "notwithstanding the great scope and success of his ( Dharmakīrti's ) propaganda he could only retard, but not stop the process of decay which befell Buddhism on its native soil. Buddhism in India was doomed. The most talented propagandist could not change the run of history. The time of Kumārila and Śaṁkarācārya, the great champions of brāhmaṇical revivals and opponents of Buddhism was approaching............Buddhism at the time of Dharmakīrti was not on the ascendancy, it was not flourishing in the same degree as at the time of the brothers—Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. The popular masses began to deturn their face from the philosophic, critical and pessimistic religion, and reverted to the worship of the great Brāhmin gods. Buddhism was beginning its migration to the north where it found a new home in Tibet, Mangolia and other countries"[1].

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[1] *Pramāṇavārttika*, trans. in Mishra, *op. cit.* p. 483.

[2] p. 327. For the translation of the verse see Mishra, *op. cit.* p. 485.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 486. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, i. pp. 35 ff.

[4] Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana, *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. 11.

**The Age of Kumārila and S'aṁkara :**

As we have noted above, the age of Kumārila and Śaṁkarācārya[2] ( 788 A. D. ) was the age of great religious ferment and Brāhmaṇic revival, for they are supposed to have been avowed opponents of Buddhism and Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* gave birth to a host of Commentaries and studies on Vedāntism of great originality, vigour and philosophic insight[3], which was further championed by Maṇḍana Miśra (800 A. D.) of Mithilā, who strongly denounced the Buddhists[4].

According to a popular legend current in Mithilā and elsewhere Śaṁkara chased the Buddhists out of India. He not only defeated and discomfitured them in logical debates, but it was also by his order that King Sudhanvā drowned thousands of Buddhists into the ocean and mercilessly massacred them[5].

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[1] *Buddhist Logic*, i. 35. For other Logicians after Dharmakīrti see Vidyābhūṣaṇa, *History of Indian Logic*; Mishra, *op. cit.* pp. 487 ff; Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana, *Mithilāṅka*, pp. 11–18.

[2] For the date of Kumārila and Śaṁkara, see *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. pp. 11–12. For other details about Kumārila, see Dasgupta, i. pp. 370 ff. and *Supra*. Chap. II.

[3] Dasgupta, i. pp. 429–94 ; ii. pp. 36–58.

[4] Dasgupta. i. pp. 418 ff. 432; ii. pp. 82–102. For other details see *Supra*, Chap. II.

[5] Cf. the following verse in Mādhava's *Śaṁkara-digvijaya* :

"Āsetorātuṣārādrerbauddhānāvṛddhabālakam
na hanti yaḥ sa hantavyo bhṛtyānityanvaśānnṛpaḥ"
"( Kumārila )—bhaṭṭapādanusāri–rājena Sudhanvanā
dharmadviṣo bauddha vināśitaḥ"

Also see *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. ii. fn. 1.

Sanskrit scholars in general do not in the least doubt the historicity of this exaggerated legend, but the facts of the contemporary history do not at all support their contention, for we have already noted above that during this period, under the patronage of the Pāla kings of Bengal, Buddhist Universities like Vikramaśilā ( in Champā or Bhagalpur ) and Odantapurī ( in Magadha ) were established. The numerous archæological remains, grants, endowments, monasteries, Buddhist images and brilliant pieces of art and sculpture also tend to suggest otherwise.[1] The above legend, therefore, probably points to the bold and vigorous stand of Śaṁkara against Buddhism and his supreme efforts to mitigate the last vestiges of its influence from its native soil.

As a matter of fact, the Sanskrit scholars of Northern India, in general and those of Mithilā in particular, were strongly averse to recognising the authority of Śaṁkara, a South Indian scholar, for a long time. They changed their attitude only when the versatile and matchless thinker and philosopher, Vācaspati Miśra I of Mithilā, the only recognised seat of philosophy in Northern India, wrote his celebrated Commentary, *Bhāmatī*, referred to above, on Śaṁkara's *Śārīrakabhāṣya*, which received unanimous ovation by scholars all over the country. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say, had there been no Vācaspati, there would have been no Śaṁkara as we know him today[2]. All honour and credit, therefore, to Vācaspati Miśra, the grand old Naiyāyika of Mithilā for defeating the Buddhists and putting an end to their supremacy and influences in Northern India by rehabilitating the orthodox Vedāntic faith. It is, therefore, no wonder to see that a host of Maithila scholars, Udayana and others, following in the foot-steps of Vācaspati, re-asserted themselves in denouncing the Buddhists with the result that Buddhism lost all its force and vigour in the following centuries.

Although the advent of the Muslim invaders and their subsequent conquests wiped away the last vestiges of Buddhism[1], the age-old tirade against them had not yet stopped. Their virtual extinction could not satisfy the Maithila scholars who would not otherwise shake off their traditional hatred towards them.

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[1] *Ibid*, Intro. pp. 11, 13 ; *2500 years of Buddhism*, pp. 231–39.

[2] *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. p. 12.

But, inspite of this under-current of feeling among a section of the populace, it seems that Maithila kings in general were tolerant towards Buddhists. From the accounts of Dharmasvāmin, the Tibetan Buddhist traveller, who visited India between 1234 and 1236 A. D. we learn that Rājā Rāmasiṁhadeva of the Karṇāta dynasty[2] presented the Buddhist traveller rice, gold, medicine etc. and requested him to stay for a few days more. Though himself a devout follower of Brāhmaṇical religion, Rāmasiṁha offered him the chief priesthood which Dharmasvāmin politely refused. The spirit of tolerance is very much evident from this offer, though according to Dharmasvāmin himself, Tirhut was a "non-Buddhist kingdom"[3].

Notwithstanding this tolerance, evidences of later period show that they were still up in arms against them. In the 14th century, the Maithila Brāhmaṇas treated the Buddhists, and not the Muslims, as their worst enemies, even two hundred years after the destruction of Nālandā and other Buddhist centres of learning. Jyotirīśvarācārya ( 1325 A. D. ), the scholar-minister of Harisiṁhadeva of the Karnāṭa dynasty of Mithilā[4], denounced them as "degraded and dangerous" and applauded Udayana's stand against them as "pleasant and commendable"[5]. The story of the massacre of the Buddhists and their patron, king Arjuna of Saptarī ( Nepal ) by the Droṇavāra Maithila king Purāditya of Raj Banaulī after Śiva-

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1. For details see *HM*, Chap. VIII.
2. *Ibid*, Chap. V.
3. *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* ( ed. by G. Rœrich ), p. 60. For other details, see Chap. III.
4. *HM*, pp. 278–86.
5. *Varṇana-Ratnākara* ( ed. Chatterjee and Misra ), p. 39 : "Bauddhapakṣa aisana āpāta bhīṣaṇa, Udayanaka siddhānta aisana prasanna".

siṁha's death[1], is yet another significant pointer to it. These stray references clearly manifest the bitterness that the Brāhmaṇas nourished against the Buddhists all through the centuries.

**Rise of Mahāyāna and Tāntricism :**

In the field of Tāntric religion and practices however, the Maithilas were immensely influenced by the Buddhist Tāntric practices. In fact, both popular and esoteric Hinduism is in its practical aspects, largely Tāntric"[2].

A great controversy centres round the origin of Tāntric religion and practices. While some scholars believe that the Tantra is a direct legacy of the Mahāyana doctrine of the Buddhists, others trace its origin in the Vedas themselves[3]. Nonetheless, scholars are unanimous on this point that the Buddhists encouraged the Tāntric cult and under its garb spread large-scale corruption amongst the innocent mass[4]. The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* infact served as a licence for those who took to these degrading methods in the name of the so-called sacred *Tāntric sādhanā*[5]. The *Vāma-mārga* is its direct contribution and its adherents, the *Aghora* saints, attracted a large number of followers. These pseudo-Siddhas in course of time came to be regarded as the embodiment of divine powers and miraculous charms and spells[6]. Wine, woman and meat were the chief sources of their *Sādhanā* or meditation which even the kings and the common people gladly offered to appease

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1. *HM*, p. 374 ; Mishra, *Vidyāpati Ṭhākura*, pp. 56–57 ; S. Sen, *Vidyāpati-Goṣṭhī*, p. 18 ; *JASB*, LXXII, pt. i. p. 27 ; Jhā, *Vivāda-cintāmaṇi of Vācaspati Miśra*, Intro. ix–x; Mitra-Mazumdar, *Vidyāpati*, p. 17, fn. 46.
2. Avalon, *Principles of Tantra*, Pref. 1 ; Bhaṭṭācārya, *Mātṛkābheda-Tantram*, Intro. 1. For details see *Supra*, Chap. II.
3. For a full discussion of this problem, see *Supra*, Chap. II.
4. Miśra, *op. cit.*- p. 500 ; *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. 9 ff.
5. *Ibid*, pp. 9 ff.
6. *Ibid*, pp. 10 ff.

them, partly out of devotion and partly out of fear of severe curses being hurled on them. In other words, Hindu society, since the eighth century A. D., came to be dominated by these bands of debauches and pseudo-sādhakas who exercised a sort of hypnotic spell over them[1]. Their prestige, influence and luxurious living attracted even the Maithilas and the followers of other religions who now freely resorted to these degrading and dubious practices to gain fame and wealth. And, like Bengal and Assam, Mithilā also produced Tāntric Sādhakas, some really great who were followers of *Dakṣiṇa-mārga* ( based on pure Yogic practices ) as opposed to the *Vāma-mārga* in the following centuries. The impact of this religion on the Maithila society may well be judged from the fact that even today all aspects of their daily life are more or less governed by this cult, though not in the degrading form as practiced by the Buddhists and their followers.

Fast-steeped in these demoralising practices, the Buddhists soon fell the worst victims to the Muslim onslaughts. Their magical powers, emanating from the so-called Tāntric cult, could not dull the sharp wrangling swords of the Turks which fell heavily on their heads. The monasteries were mercilessly plundered and destroyed and their inhabitants massacred. The king and the commoners who were so long hypnotised by their magic spells, discovered, to their utter bewilderment and surprise, in these so-called *Siddhas*, bands of wretched debauches and drunkards, too weak to arrest the process of destruction, caused by the new invasion, which was fast approaching them. Dejected and frustrated they had now nothing but contempt for them and got bitterly opposed to contributing funds for the repairing of the monasteries and *Vihāras* which now symbolised vices, debauchery and degradation[2].

Unlike the Buddhists, only a small section of the Brāhmaṇa Tāntrikas had taken recourse to *Vāma-mārga*, whereas the larger section were adherents of the *Dakṣiṇa-mārga* which preached Sādhanā through purely Yogic practices. This section as such still retained their hold on the society by virtue of their ideal character and noble deeds. It is, therefore, no wonder to find that whenever Hindu temples were desecrated and destroyed by the Muslims, they were immediately repaired and reconstructed with the large funds voluntarily contributed by the same Hindu kings and chiefs. Dreaded and demoralised, a large section of the Buddhists now fled to Tibet, Nepal and other countries, and those who remained became converts either to Hinduism or to Islam within two centuries[1].

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 10 ff.

[2] *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. pp. 13-14 ; R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar, the Homeland of Buddhism*, pp. 50-52.

## Buddhist Antiquities in Mithilā :

Contrary to the literary accounts, archaeological remains, found in different parts of Mithilā, have altogether a different tale to tell. Although no large scale excavations have been undertaken in this part of the country except the Vaiśālī or Basārh excavations, yet the stray finds and the scattered remains of the numerous images of the Buddha and beautiful fragments of Buddhist art and other Buddhist objects of antiquarian interest throw considerable light on the popularity of of Buddhism even in this most orthodox part of the country.

According to Maithila scholars themselves, Saptarī, Bhālā pargana, Buddhāma ( Buddhagrāma ), Ratnapura, Brahmapura, Visālā ( Visārā ), Vetthadiyā or Bettiā, Raḍhiā and Maṭhiā ( in Champaran ) and other places were strong-holds of Buddhism in Mithilā[2]. There were Buddhist pillars in Raḍhiā and Maṭhiā while in Bakharā ( in Visālā or Visārā pargana ) there were big monasteries and stūpas[3] where Buddhists flocked from all over the country.

Vaiśālī was the biggest strong-hold of Buddhism in early days. The Buddha announced his approaching *nirvāṇa* here, and after the *nirvāṇa* the Licchavis are said to have erected a stūpa over their share of the remains of the Master. During the third Vaiśālī excavations[1] ( 13th January, 1958 ) under the auspices of the K. P. Jayaswal institute, Patna, A. S. Altekar claimed to have discovered this stūpa of the Licchavis, and the relic-casket found inside according to him "most probably contains the relics of the Blessed one himself".[2] Besides Rājā Bisāl kā garh, Yuan Chwang also refers to thirteen stūpas at Vaiśālī of which eleven were commemorative and two relic-stūpas—one, being that of the Buddha and the other of Ānanda.

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[1] *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. p. 14; R. K. Choudhary, *op. cit.* pp. 106–07; For details, see *Supra*, Chap. II.

[2] P. Jhā, *op. cit.* p. 92.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 92.

The Rāmakuṇḍa in Vaiśālī identified by Cunningham with the ancient *Markaṭa-hrada* ( monkey's tank ) is believed to have been dug by a colony of monkeys for the use of the Buddha. To the north-west there is a ruined mound about 15 ft. high and with a diameter of about 65 ft. at the base, which has been identified with the remains of the Aśoka stūpa mentioned by Yuan Chwang. There stands now a modern brick temple on the summit of this mound enshrining a mediaeval image of the Buddha.[3]

At Kolhuā two miles to the north of Rājā Bisāl kā garh, there is a monolithic pillar, known as Bhīmasena's Lāṭh. The line of pillars in the Champaran and Muzaffarpur districts at Kesariyā, Rāmapurvā, Lauriya Ararāja, Lauriya Nandanagarh, Jānakīgarh, and Kolhuā is believed to have marked the stages of Aśoka's journey from Pāṭaliputra to Lumbinī which he undertook in the twentieth year of his consecration.[4]

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1. The first two excavations were carried under Block and Spooner in the years 1903–04 and 1913–14 respectively ( vide—*Arch. Surv. Rep*. 1903–04 and 1913–14 ).
2. Vide—A. S. Altekar's article, "Stūpa of the Licchavis" in the *Searchlight*, Patna, April 17, p. 4. Also cf. *Indian Archaeology*, 1957–58, pp. 10–11. The view was much publicised but nothing definite can be said in the present state of our knowledge as the so-called relics still await chemical examination.
3. For other details, see *2500 years of Buddhism*, pp. 320–22, 278 ff. For Lumbinī, Bodhagayā and other places of Buddhist interest, *Ibid*, Chap. XII ; R. K. Choudhary, *op. cit*. pp. 118–39.
4. For a full discussion of these places, see Qureshi, *Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa* ; *Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep*. 1903–04 and 1913–14 ( reports on Vaiśālī ) ; *HM*, p. 170 ; *PHAI*, p. 309.

Kesariyā in Champaran district is supposed to be the spot where the Buddha took leave of the Licchavis and where he presented his alms-bowl to them. It is believed that they erected a stūpa over the spot where the alms-bowl was presented by the Lord.[1] But, unfortunately there is a total absence of any distinct symbol of Buddhism on the seals found in Vaiśālī.

The earthen stūpas or caityas of Lauriya Nandagarh probably form part of those alluded to by the Buddha himself in his sixth question to Ānanda about the people of Vṛji.[2] It is also believed by some to be the site where the "Ashes Stūpa" was erected over the ashes taken from Buddha's funeral pyre.[3]

Through the efforts of Yazdani, several new frescoes were brought to light in the thirties of the present century. One of the frescoes in cave XVI refers to a Jātaka story. It says : "Once the Bodhisattva was born as Mahosadha, son of Sirivaddha, in the kingdom of Mithilā. King Videha was astonished to see his intelligence and was advised by sages like Senaka, Pukkusa, Kavīndra and Devindra, to send for the boy to be appointed as his minister. In course of the test of his intelligence, the sages asked him to solve some riddles". "Once a child was stolen and it was through the efforts of Mahosadha that the mother got the child." This is also illustrated in the Ajantā fresco. It seems that the figure represented as delivering the Mahosadha. The *Mahāummagga Jātaka* was very popular with the Buddhist artists and several representations of this *Jātaka* are found in sculpture and paintings at Bharahūta, Ajantā, Nāgārjunikoṇḍai, Bāgha and Amarāvatī.[4] The above instances clearly suggest the influence of the Buddha over Mithilā in those days.

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[1] S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, p. L11, *Arch. Surv. Rep.* Vol. XVI ( North and South Bihar ).

[2] Turnour, in *JASB.* vii. p. 994; Cunningham, *AGI.* pp. 514–15 ; R. K. Choudhary, *Inscriptions of Bihar,* Intro. p. 24.

[3] Vide-Smith's paper on Kuśīnārā or Kuśīnagrāma in *JRAS*. 1902.

[4] Cf. *Mahāummagga* J., No. 546 ( Fausboll, vii, p. 336 ; Cowell, vi. p. 163 ) ; *Mahāvastu* quoted in B. C. Law, *A Study of the Mahāvastu*, p. 144; R. K. Choudhary in *JBRS*, Buddha Jayanti Vol. I, p. 62.

The growth of Buddhism in Eastern India ( Bihar and Bengal ), as we have already noted above, was largely due to the establishment of the Buddhist Universities of Nālandā, Vikramaśilā, Udyantapura or Odantapura and Vajrāsana, all situated in South Bihar, and Mithilā or North Bihar was not completely away from the main current of Buddhism. There were many Buddhist sites in Mithilā during this period ( 600–1200 A. D. ). They served either as *vihāras* or as places of Buddhist worship where many images of Buddhist religion have been discovered. The following Buddhist sites deserve special mention.

Kolhuā in the Vaiśālī area in the district of Muzaffarpur where a good image of the Buddha with an inscription of the Pāla period was discovered ; Ponjha, a village two miles east of Goraul railway station in the district of Muzaffarpur where an image of the Buddha was found about three years ago ( this is a new site, not noticed so far ) ; Chaugamā, Pandaul, Jarahatiya and Andhrā-Thārhi in the district of Darbhanga and Naulāgarh, Jayamaṅgalāgarh, Bihat, Sāmho in the district of Monghyr, north of the Gaṅgā. Of these Naulāgarh and Jayamaṅgalāgarh are most important and second only to Vaiśālī in North Bihar; Mathahi, Mehisi, Birpur, Śrīnagara in the district of Saharasā and Gorodih in the district of Purnea.

The Naulāgarh excavations[1] recently conducted by Prof. R. K. Choudhary have yielded some excellent results which have strong bearing on the history of Buddhism in North Bihar. On the basis of the materials discovered there, it can be said that Naulāgarh ( Eastern Monghyr, to the north about 16 miles from Begusarai ) had a continuous history from the beginning of the Buddhist age down to the Muslim period. The exploration of Jayamaṅgalāgarh[2] and other adjoining sites and the discovery of the black ( Gaya ) stone image ranging from the Gāndhāra School to the Eastern School of Mediaeval Sculpture discovered from Bihat, Birpur, Naulāgarh and Jayamaṅgalāgarh point to the existence of a big ancient establishment in this part of the country.[1] These finds unmistakably show that Jayamaṅgalāgarh and Naulāgarh were two important ancient Buddhist sites.

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[1] For a full report see *G. D. College Bulletin Series* Nos. 1–2.

[2] *Ibid.* No. 2, pp. 11–19. Jayamaṅgalāgarh is situated very close to another ancient fort, Maṅglāgarh in the Samastipur Sub-

From the surface-finds of the rampart area a large number of N. B. P. ( Northern Black Polish ) pieces ; near—N. B. P. glazed pottery pieces ; grey pottery pieces ; a fine piece of polished stone and various kinds of beads and terracottas have been collected which, taken together, indicate that Naulāgarh had acquired much prominence during the Buddhist period.[2] In this connection, it is significant to note that a black stone image of Bodhisattva in Gāndhāra style has also been discovered there.

The Naulāgarh inscription No. 2 ( 11th–12th century A.D. ) is another brilliant discovery[3] and is unique in the sense that it gives an idea about the existence of a Buddhist *vihāra* for the first time in North Bihar or Tīrabhukti. The purpose of this inscription appears to record the erection of a monastery.[4] Though we have references to ten Buddhist monasteries in Monghyr ( e.g. Rajaonā, Urena[5] etc. ), we have had no information about the existence of any such site on the northern

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Division of Darbhanga district, about 14 miles to the east of Jayamaṅgalāgarh.

[1] *Ibid.* No. 2, p. 1.

[2] *Ibid.* Nos. 2–3. Specimens of these varieties are preserved in the Jayaswal Archaeological and Historical Society and Museum, G. D. College, Begusarai ( Monghyr District ).

[3] *Ibid.* No. 1, p. 10, pl. 3 ; No. 2, p. 6.

[4] Deciphered and edited by Prof. R. K. Choudhary ( vide—*Ibid.* No. 2, p. 7 ).

[5] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, ii, p. 178 ; Beal, ii, p. 186 ; Wadde, "Discovery of Buddhist remains at Uren" in *JASB*, Vol. I. 1892; *G. D. College Bulletin Series*, No. 2, p. 8.

side of the Gaṅgā before the discovery of this inscription. We, however, know that there were some important religious centres where the Chinese travellers flocked to pay their homage. Of these Sin-che temple was the most important centre which was visited by at least four Chinese travellers.[1] Sin-che temple lay somewhere between the Aṅguttarapa region[2] ( Aṅguttarapa Janapada ) and the Kuśī country. An important Buddhist centre in the beginning, it later on developed into a *vihāra*,[3] and, "the establishment of the Pāla political power in Naulāgarh was followed by the establishment of a *vihāra* there[4]". Various mounds at Naulāgarh, besides the fortification area, definitely point to the existence of *vihāras* and other establishments.

The whole area of Jayamaṅgalāgarh is dotted with mounds and the place seems to have been the religious centre of the ancient rulers of Naulāgarh. There is still a temple of the goddess of Jayamaṅgalā, probably the Tāntric deity, and on every Tuesday and Saturday people assembled there to worship the goddess. It was regarded as one of the most important pīṭhas of India.[5]

A Siamese Buddhist traveller who came to Jayamaṅgalāgarh in 1936–37 to pay a visit to the sacred Buddhist shrine pointed out that in ancient times it was a sacred Buddhist place frequently visited by the pilgrims from China and Siam. According to him, the place later became the centre of Tāntric Buddhism. He also referred to the Siamese Buddhist tradition

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1. Beal, *Life of Hieun-Tsang*, pp. xxii–xxxvi.
2. According to Buddhist literature, Aṅguttarapa lay to the north of the Gaṅgā, meaning thereby north Monghyr and North Bhagalpur ( Begusarai, Saharasa and North Purnea ). It was a small Janapada and is even today represented linguistically by the Eastern variety Maithilī ( vide–Vidyālaṅkāra and Mehta, *Bihar*, p. 12; Watters, i. p. 382 ). Also see *G. D. College Bulletin Series*, No. 2, pp. 15–16.
3. *Ibid*. No. 2, pp. 9–10.
4. *Ibid*. 10.
5. *Ibid*. 11.

which records the establishment of numerous caityas and stūpas at the place.[1] Whatever his contention, the fact remains that Jayamaṅgalāgarh is still regarded as a very important centre of Tāntric cult and attracts Tāntrikas from different parts of the country. Recently a Bengali and a Nepalese Paṇḍitas came over and practised Tāntric rites there for three years continuously.[2]

Local tradition also avers that this place has been visited by a host of Siamese and Chinese travellers.[3] It is very likely that after the Pāla period this place became an important centre of Śakti cult. Moreover, we know that the Tāntric cult was a continuation of Tāntric Buddhism and the Pīṭha came to be established later.[4]

The Barantapura Caṇḍīsthāna inscription is yet another important discovery throwing light on the state on Buddhism in Mithilā. Temples at Barantapura and Rahota (in Saharasa) were built by some Buddhists in about 1100 A. D. The inscription refers to Sarvasiṁhadeva, adorned with every virtue and the joy-bestowing moon of the lotus-lineage of Buddheśa[5]. The Bongāon copper-plate inscription ( in Bongāon, District Saharasā ) of Vigrahapāla III is yet another important document which says that the village Vasukavartta in the Hodreya Viṣaya of Tīrabhukti was granted in the name of Lord Buddha with the specified privileges in accordance with the *bhūmichidranyāya* in favour of a Brāhmaṇa[6]. It clearly shows that the

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[1] *Ibid*. p. 11. There are still four undisturbed mounds there popularly known as *Daityāḍīha*. One of these mounds is certainly a stūpa and the other a caitya.

[2] *Ibid*. p. 14.

[3] For the list of Chinese travellers who visited North Bihar, see *Ibid*. p. 16.

[4] For a description of the images of different gods and goddesses, see *Ibid*. pp. 18–19.

[5] R. K. Choudhary, *Inscriptions of Bihar*, Intro. 20, p. 127 : "श्रीमन्माहेश्वरी वरलब्ध सत्क्रिया विराज बुद्धेश वंशस्य सदाचन्द्रराज श्रीमत् सर्व्वसिंहदेव विजयी"

[6] *Ibid*. Intro. pp. 13–14.

Pāla kings, though themselves Buddhists, showed toleration towards other sects and bestowed gifts on them. Besides these, many other inscriptions in Bihar of the Pāla period clearly show that Buddhism was then a dominant force.

It will not be out of place to mention here a few words about some of the important stray finds made at different places in the locality, for they have a strong bearing on the Buddhist cult in North Bihar. A small black stone image, found in village Bihat ( near Teghra Station on the N. E. Railway ), belonging to the Gāndhāra school, as is evident from its head-dress, probably represents the Buddhist art in the Gupta period[1].

We have another very fine image of standing Buddha with the image of Buddha on all sides, in various *mudrās*. It bears an inscription at the pedestal which is the famous Buddhist *mantra*[2] as found on other similar images of the period. Palaeographically it can be placed in the ninth century A. D. It is significant, for the Buddha is represented here in most of his various *mudrās*[3]. A similar image in black stone with the same inscription is preserved in village Sāmho in Begusarai Sub-division and is now worshipped by the villagers[4].

A rare image of Avilokiteśvara Buddha in black stone bearing an inscription, was discovered recently in Lakhisarai ( Monghyr District )[5]. Avilokiteśvara is all compassionate

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[1] G. D. *College Bulletin Series* No. 2, p. 20.

[2] This image is now in possession of Śrī Bisheshwar Narain Singh of Begusarai. For the inscription, see *Ibid*, pp. 20–21.

[3] For the description of the various *mudrās* of the Buddha, see J. N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography* ( 2nd Ed. ) ; *G. D. College Bulletin Series* No. 2, pp. 20–22 ; N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical sculptures in the Dacca Meuseum*, pp. 16–19.

[4] *G. D. College Bulletin Series* No. 2, p. 22.

[5] It is now preserved in Ashutosh Museum, Cal. Univ. ( vide—*Modern Review*, 1951, p. 377 ).

Bodhisattva. It looms large in the varied pantheon of Northern Buddhists as a Bodhisattva is said to have emanated from the Divine Buddha. *Ava* signifies active energy. Thirty-one *sādhanas* are enumerated for the worship of his different forms[1]. Iconographically, the image is rare as it is one-faced and a-seated. The Pāla rulers of Bengal and Bihar were Buddhists and the Buddha was regularly invoked. This innovation was responsible for the depiction of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the most developed Mahāyāna form, and of all the various types the image of Aviloketeśvara was most important during this period. Mahāyānism influenced Vaiṣṇavite art and gradually there was a blending of the older Bhāgavata class of Vaiṣṇava images and the Lokeśvara of the later Mahāyāna School of Buddhism[2]. Palaeographically, the inscription may be assigned to the twelfth century when the Pāla Empire under Gopāla III had already begun to show signs of crack[3].

Remains of a Buddhist Stūpa have also been discovered from Gorodih ( Purnea )[4] and numerous valuable objects of Buddhist antiquities in the Madhepura Sub-division ( of Saharasa district ) have been practically washed away by the Kośī floods of which we have unfortunately no traces left now. Recently, different images of the Buddha in different *mudrās* were found in Mathiahi, a Railway Station on the Saharasa-Madhepura line ( now N. E. F. Railway ). Moreover, numerous Buddhist shrines and temples in North Bihar are lying buried under the deep water of the Kośī river. Several Buddhist images have recently been found in Mehisi

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1. B. Bhattacharya, *PAIOC*. Cal. 1922, pp. 285–86 ( vide—*Sādhanamāla* ).
2. R. D. Banerjee, *Eastern School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, p. 96; *2500 years of Buddhism*, Chap. XI ; R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar, The Home Land of Buddhism*, Chap. IV ; *G. D. College Bulletin Series* No. 1, p. 15.
3. *Ibid*. No. 2, pp. 23–25. At Naulāgarh the images of Viṣṇu and Bodhisattva have been found side by side, *Ibid*. No. 1, pp. 10, 15 ; *Buddhacaryyā*, Intro. 12–14.
4. For details, see *Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep*. 1903–04.

village, an old seat of the Maithila Brāhmaṇas ( Saharasa district ).

The district of Purnea also abounds in Buddhist relics. If the identification of Pauṇḍravardhana or Puṇḍravardhana with portions of Purnea and Malda are to be relied upon, then Yuan Chwang's visit to that place via Kajangal is remarkable. According to Wilson[1], the ancient kingdom of Puṇḍradeśa included the districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Malda, Bogra and Tirhut. The country is said to have been situated between the rivers Mahānandā and Karatoyā. This boundary conforms to that of Tirhut or Tīrabhukti in ancient times which also included a part of the district of Purnea[2]. Linguistically, eastern Purnea still forms an inseparable part of Mithilā. That the entire area right from Mithilā or Tirhut down to Kajangala or Rajmahal was dotted with Buddhist shrines and monasteries hobbing with life, along with Deva ( Brāhmaṇic ) temples, is clear, beyond doubt, from the accounts of Yuan Chwang[3].

In Sultaganj, in the district of Bhagalpur, Buddhist remains were discovered as far back as 1864. There is a singular mass of granite towering abruptly to the height of about a hundred feet from the bed of the river Gaṅgā, known as Jaugirah, surmounted by a small stone temple of the deity Gaibinātha, a form of Śiva. The face of the rock is covered by a number of bassi-relievi, most of which are Hindu and include representations of Ganeśa, Hanumāna, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā, Vāmana, Ananta sleeping on a snake, Śiva and other Purāṇic deities. But, there are a few which are decidedly of Buddhist and Jaina origin. The Buddhist figures, mostly Buddha in the meditative posture, occupy more centrical positions than the Hindu ones and appear to be more worn away than the latter ; both circumstances affording conclusive evidences of the place having been originally a Buddhist sanctuary which the Brāhmaṇas have propitiated to themselves since the downfall of Buddhism. A Jaina temple still exists on one side of the rock to which a few pilgrims occasionally come to offer their adoration to Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third teacher of the sect[1].

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[1] *Viṣṇu, p.* ii. pp. 134, 170.

[2] Also cf. B.C.Law, *Historical Geography of Ancient India*, pp. 246-48, Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, pp. 549-50; N. L. Dey, *Ancient Geography*, pp. 161-162, 154-55 ; D. C. Sirkar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, p. 94.

[3] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, ii, pp. 182-83 ; Cunningham, *op. cit.* pp. 547-48; N. L. Dey, *op. cit.* p. 83; *JRAS*. 1904, pp. 86-88. Cunningham takes Kajangala to be Rajmahal while Dey identifies it with Kajra, one of the stations on E. I. Ry. in the district of Monghyr. Three miles to the south of this place, there are still many remains of the Buddhist period and also many hot springs.

Of the relics collected by Harris, in course of his excavations at this place, the most important appears to be a colossal figure of Buddha ( now in the Birmingham museum ) which was found lying on a side of the hall. The statue weighing nearly one ton is of copper and seems to have suffered no injury from the hands of the destroyer, except the mutilation of the left foot across the ankle. The figure bears a close resemblance to the sand-stone statues largely found at Sāranātha. It stands in *abhayadāna mudrā*. Besides, the articles numbering more than fifty-four discovered at this place unmistakably point to the building being a large Buddhist monastery or *vihāra* such as existed at Sāranātha, Sānchī, Bodhagayā, Manikyāla and other places.

Though we know nothing of the history of this *vihāra*, it is nonetheless evident from its extent and the style of its construction, that at one time it was a place of great repute and the resort of innumerable pilgrims. "But its glory set a long while ago, and even the name of the place where it stood is now lost in obscurity. The present appelation ( Sultanganj ) is quite modern, not more than two or three centuries old, and is due to a prince of the house of Akbar"[2]. We have no mention of this monastery in the account of Fa-Hian. Yuan Chwang no doubt talks of the ruins of several large monasteries in the neighbourhood of Bhagalpur but gives no clue to this important monastery. It may, therefore, be presumed that it had been ruined or forsaken, or atleast had fallen into decay, before the coming of Yuan Chwang. "The inscription on the minor figures, in the Gupta character of the third and fourth century, show that the *vihāra* with its chief *lares* and *penates* had been established a considerable period before that time, probably at the beginning of the Christian era or even earlier, for Campā ( modern Bhagalpur ) was a place of great antiquity and the Buddhists took possession of it very early as the capital of Eastern India and established many *vihāras* and *caityas* in and about it"[1]. Though most of them have been destroyed by the cruel ravages of time, there are yet Buddhist monuments of yore in the vicinity.

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[1] *JASB*. xxxiii ( 1864 ), p. 360.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 369.

Finally, these structures are models or miniature representations of sepulchral monuments, and they owe their origin to an injunction in the Buddhist scriptures which recommend the dedication of such monuments as an act of great religious merit. Hence they have engaged the earnest attention of the followers of Gautama from an early age, and many are the ruins in India which now attest the lavish expenditure which some of its former kings and princes incurred in raising them in a manner worthy of their ambition[2].

Very recently pieces of Buddhist art were discovered in course of a trial excavation conducted in the Chaugamā village under the Bahera P. S. ( in Darbhanga Sadar ). The site is full of ancient mounds. The excavation has brought to light the existence of a beautiful complete structure of a temple, perhaps the only specimen of a temple-architecture in Mithilā[3]. The temple contains an image of *Varāha,* and is a difinite indication of the Buddhist art in black stone in the Gupta period. A gorgoyle with *jaladhari* belonging to the ninth century A. D. of the type that is lying in the Patna Meuseum has also been discovered. Some exceptionally beautiful relics, metal images, Aśvamedha type of bricks etc. belonging to the Gupta period have also been unearthed[1]. The whole village of Bahera is dotted with mounds. Within a redius of fifteen to twenty miles there are no less than fifteen mounds of considerable importance and some of them are associated with the ancient Buddhist sites[2].

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 369.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 371.

[3] *Inscriptions of Bihar*, Intro. 18.

Recently a red stone life-image of the Buddha, weighing about 30 mounds, belonging to the Gupta period, has been discovered in a village near Pandaul in Madhubani Sub-division of the district of Darbhanga[3]. A few years back, a big image of the Dhyānī Buddha was unearthed in a field to the west of the tank, said to have been dug by order of Mahārāja Bhairava Siṁha of the Oinavāra dynasty of Mithilā[4] in village Jarahatiya in Madhubani Sub-division. The image also bore an inscription on the pedestal, but it was too blurred to be deciphered. Maithila scholars believe that it was an important Buddhist site in ancient times[5]. Alongside the famous Kamalāditya temple in village Andhrā-Tharhī ( in Madhubani Sub-division ), constructed by Śrīdhara, the Prime-minister of Nānyadeva, the founder of the Karṇāṭa dynasty of Mithilā ( 1097 A. D. )[6], a pillar with the inscription *Magaradhaja Jogī 700* ( probably of the 12th–13th centuries ) was also found[7].

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[1] R. K. Choudhary, "*Discoveries in North Bihar*" in *JBRS*. Vol. XLIII, pp. 365 ff.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] For this piece of information I am endebted to my esteemed friend, Śrī Tilak Nath Mishra, B. A , B. L. dealer in antiquities.

[4] *HM*, Chap. VI.

[5] P. Jhā. *op, cit*, pp. 92–93.

[6] *HM*, Chap. V.

[7] P. Jhā. *op. cit*. p. 104. This inscription has been found in different parts of Bihar, U. P., Orissa, C. P., and Rajputana. According to some, Magaradhvaja was a Śaiva teacher having 700 followers all over India ( cf. *Inscriptions of Bihar*, Intro. 19, fn. 4 ; Also see *Supra*. Chap. II ) It is possible that when the Buddha was admitted as an avatāra into the fold of Hindu pantheon, the Śaivas claimed it as their own.

*Magardhaja Jogī* means *Makardhvaja Yoga* but the true import of the figure "700" is not clear. Maithila scholars believe that the inscription probably refers to the seven hundred Buddhist saṁghas or Maṭhas in the region, for it is also known to be an ancient Buddhist site[1].

## Conclusion :

From the above survey it is clear beyond doubt that inspite of the wordy duel, sometimes culminating in bloodshed, Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism flourished side by side in Mithilā, though in the course of a few centuries the latter lost its hold on the soil. But the process of borrowing and intermingling never stopped. The Hindus borrowed from the Buddhists goddesses like Mahāchinnatārā, Tārā, Manasā, Chinnamastā symbolising the Śakti cult. The Buddhists, on the other hand, absorbed Hindu gods, like Yakṣeśvara, Gandhārī, Dhyāna, Aparājita and others[2]. It is true, the latest form of Vajrayāna weakened Buddhist influence on every aspect of Indian life, but it is also true that it has left a permanent mark on the culture of India. The Hindus in later years reconciled to their viewpoint by accepting the Buddha as the tenth *avatārā* and put a finis to the age-old controversies and bitter wranglings[3]. The Hindu faith has obsorbed the best of its ethics. "A new respect for life, kindness to animals, a sense of responsibility and an endeavour after higher life have been brought home to Indian mind with renewed force. Thanks to Bnddhist influences, the Brāhmaṇical systems have shed those parts of their religion which were irreconcilable with humanity and reason"[1].

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 104. My esteemed friend, Prof. Rama Kanta Jha, M. A. B. L., of R. K. College Madhubani informs me that besides the life-image of the Buddha there are a big door-frame of iron and numerous Buddhist remains lying scattered over the entire area. These remains tend to indicate that there must have been a big monastery or Maṭha as most of these objects are still lying half burried and can be seen from the *ḍīh*. For other Buddhist sites in Mithilā and the adjoining tracts, see *Inscriptions of Bihar*, Intro, 11 ff ; writer's forthcoming book, *History of Mithilā*, Vol. II. App. D.

[2] R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar, The Homeland of Buddhism*, pp. 139-40.

[3] For other details, see *Supra*, Chap. V.

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[1] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 608 ff.

## CHAPTER V

# The Last Phase

### Introduction :

The main phases in the development and growth of Jainism and Buddhism from their earliest appearance in Mithilā till the advent of the Muslim rule may be roughly indicated. The notion that Mithilā was not in the least affected or influenced by these religions is thoroughly erroneous as we have conclusively shown in the preceding pages. Like all other parts of India, the land of Mithilā was also for a long time under the spell of both Jainism and Buddhism though the latter was more forceful and militant in character. The greatest influence may yet be seen in the daily life of the people, which speaks of the gradual synthesis of these systems of thought, so largely responsible for the emergence of a new force that ultimately dominated the general run of life in this most orthodox land.

### The Last Phase of Jainism in Mithilā :

It is true that Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism at times clashed violently with one another but so far as the conduct of their followers was concerned, it is now fully admitted by scholars that the systems are really not antagonistic, but complimentary to one another. Moreover, these clashes instead of spelling a curse really proved a great boon to Indian thought which was greatly enriched by the sparkling genius of a large number of euridite and varsatile thinkers and scholars who advanced new logic in order to refute the views of their opponents. The wordy duel continued for centuries and contributed most to the development and growth of Indian logic and philosophy. In this great intellectual war-fare Mithilā's contributions are really superb and second to none.

The notion that Jainism arose out of Buddhism or that it was founded by Mahāvīra, a contemporary of Buddha, has now been proved to be erroneous. On the other hand, the origin of Jainism can be traced back to the Vedic age. As we have shown in the preceding pages[1], the *Ṛgveda* glorifies a class of ascetics known as *Vātaraśanā Munayaḥ* i.e., the wind-clad sages. They have also been frequently referred to in the *Atharvaveda*, and the rest of the Vedic as well as later literature. Their leader was Keśī who has been identified with Ṛṣabha Deva described in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as a saint belonging to the class of *Vātaraśanā Munis*, the first Jaina Tīrthaṅkara of that name[2]. It is thus clear that the Śramaṇa Munis and the Vedic Ṛṣis flourished side by side in the earlier ages of our history. Notwithstanding the differences in their ideals and practices, they were equally honoured by the people. Their difference in approach to worldly problems lay in the fact that while the Vedic Ṛṣis valued material prosperity and developed elaborate system of prayers and rituals to achieve their end, the Śramaṇas stressed upon the transitory nature of all worldly belongings and pleasures, and as such condemned sacrificial rituals and emphasised the suppression of inner passions like love and hatred. The word *Brahma* originally meant a "prayer" or "sacrifice" and one who practised them was called a "Brāhmaṇa" whereas a "Śramaṇa" endeavoured to conquer the self and pacify all violent feelings ( *samana* ). Inspite of marked rivalries and intolerance between the adherents of these two schools, they were yet objects of great reverence for the common people, and the terms *Ṛṣis* and *Munis* gradually became synonymous and interchangeable. Later, the Śramaṇas themselves began to claim that they were the true Brāhmaṇas.

The school of Śramaṇas had its stronghold in Eastern India, particularly Bihar. Amongst the Śramaṇas grew numerous kinds of ascetic practices and ideologies and as such they were split up into various branches. The Jaina texts refer to no less than 363 of them. We have mention of quite a few in the Pāli texts also. The sects had in Mankhali-gosala, Prakuddha Kātyāyana and Ajitakesakanbli some of their most important leaders. One of these organisations to attain particular celebrity was *Niggantha* or *Nirgrantha.* This name was probably substituted for *Vātaraśanā Munis* in the time of Pārśvanātha about 250 years before the rise of Mahāvīra who is also called Niggrantha Nātha-putra[1].

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[1] *Supra*, Chap. III.

[2] *JBRS*, XLIV, p. 2.

Mahāvira and Buddha, however, gave a definite shape to the Śramaṇa ideology, practice and organisation, both in his own way. Both started their ascetic career with the practices which were then current, and soon marked out their own new ways—Mahāvira taking to the extremes to attain *kaivalya* and Buddha, the *Majhimā-patipāda* ( the middle path ) to attain *nirvāṇa* which we have already discussed in the previous chapters.

As constrasted with the Upaniṣadic thought, Jainism recognises two ultimate realities, the living and the non-living, the latter manifesting itself in the form of matter, space and time. Besides this, the Jaina metaphysics peculiarly enough recognises two other non-living elements—*dharma* and *adharma,* thus making motion and static state possible in space. The Jaina system is dualistic like the Sāṁkhya system with its own primary elements—*Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti,* from which the Jaina ideas, however, differ widely in details.. Thus, in contrast to the immutability of the only reality *brahma,* the Jaina philosophy explains all substances to have a real existence, and existence as characterised by origin, decay and continuity. In other words, it reconciles the seemingly opposite views of Vedānta and Buddhist philosophy, as the latter emphasises the *kṣaṇikatva* ( momentariness ) of all existence[2].

The contributions of Jaina thinkers to the formulation of their moral code are unique and the ten virtues they have propagated are to be found in some form or other in all the societies of the world. Moreover, their contributions to the growth and enrichment of ancient languages of the people and their literature, Prākṛt and Sanskrit, philosophy, sciences such as astronomy and mathematics and art, paintings, sculpture and architecture and Indian culture as a whole have been second to none. It has not remained confined to any particular part of the country and its fundamental ideal has been peace and promotion of goodwill amongst all and attainment of supreme knowledge as the highest goal of life.

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 3.

[2] For other details, see *Ibid*, pp. 5–7.

Coming to the actual state of Jainism in Mithilā or North Bihar proper, we find that it was on gradual decline from c. 600 A. D. to 1200 A. D., for during this period we have stray references to the existence of Jaina population in Vaiśālī and elsewhere.[1] But, after this period there seems to have been a great set-back to this religion in the region as we are surprised to note that the Jainas gradually forgot their real tradition and the actual birth-place of their prophet, Mahāvira. The tragedy is that some of the Jaina authors betray their colossal ignorance of the place of Mahāvira's birth, and distort geography either deliberately or due to their ignorance. Asaga ( eleventh Vikrama saṁvat ) mentions Kuṇḍapura in his work but keeps silent over its exact location. Some of the Digambara Jaina works go so far as to refer to Viśālā as having been situated in Sindhu-viṣaya or Sindhu-deśa.[2] Thus, according to them, Tīrabhukti or Videha lay in Sindhu-viṣaya—an assuption too absurd and far-fetched to merit serious attention.

Madanakīrti, a Digambara Jaina of Ujjayinī, in his small work, *Śāsanacatustriṁśikā*[3] describes twenty-six Jaina *tīrthas* but does not include Kuṇḍapura or *Kuṇḍagrāma* or Vaiśālī in this list. Dharmasvāmin ( A. D. 1197–1264 ), a Tibetan Buddhist monk, who visited India in 1234–1236 A. D. passed through Vaiśālī in 1234 A. D. He was "told that the inhabitants were in a state of great commotion and panic-stricken, because of rumours ( about the arrival ) of Turushka troops".[4] He found a "stone-image of Ārya Tārā" and "a female lay-supporter was seen staying in the street".[1] But he does not say anything about the Jainas there. It clearly shows that there was no Jaina population worth the name there.

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[1] *Supra*, Chap. III.

[2] Y. Mishra, *op. cit.* pp. 230–31.

[3] Quoted, *Ibid.* p. 231.

[4] *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, ed. G. Roerich, pp. 61–62, 98.

A century later, Jinaprabha Sūri, in his *Tīrthakalpa* ( A. D. 1332 ) says that an image of Vīra was at *Kuṇḍagrāma*[2]. While giving lists of famous Jaina tīrthas of the time he mentions Kuṇḍagrāma twice[3], but devotes no independent chapter to the birth-place of the last Tīrthaṅkara.

The destruction of the main city of Vaiśālī sometime in the sixth century A. D. as testified to by Yuan Chwang and its desertion in c. 600 A. D. as proved by the archaeological excavation in 1950 of the Garh area, was largely responsible for the decline in the fortunes of Vaiśālī as a Jaina centre and also due to frequent changes in the river beds at Vaiśālī. By this time Śrāvastī and Pāṭaliputra were also in ruins which must have told heavily upon the trade-route from Śrāvastī to Pāṭaliputra via Vaiśālī. With the commercial importance of this intermediate city gone, the mercantile Jaina community of North Bihar must have been hard hit and the decline that followed subsequently in the economic prosperity ( besides political reasons ) was partly responsible for the migrations of the people of Vaiśālī to places like Nepal, Burma, Tibet and Ladak.[4]

The diversion of Jainism towards South and West India was no less responsible for this gradual decline of Vaiśālī, with the result that the Jainas lost all contact with the birth-place of their prophet, which soon lost all its glorious traditions. The Jaina *munis*, authors and thinkers also went to the court of these South and West Indian kings to receive their patronage.

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1. *Ibid*, p. 61.
2. *Tīrthakalpa*, ed. by D. K. Bhandarkar and Kedarnath, Bib. Ind. Series, 1942, pp. 286–87.
3. *Ibid*, pp. 8, 286. For the lists, see pp. 8, 282–87.
4. Y. Mishra, *op. cit.* pp. 232–233.

The growth of Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism in North Bihar during this period also led to the mass-scale migrations of the Jainas from the place of its birth towards South and West[1].

The Muslim conquest of Bengal and Bihar registered the last blow to its already tottering edifice. The new conquerors persecuted not only the Buddhists but also the Jainas. The finale came when the Hindu kingdom of Tirhut was conquered by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq in 1324 A. D.[2].

With the coming of the Muslims, Islam gradually replaced both Jainism and Buddhism in the Vaiśālī area. During the period 1434–1495 A. D. Sheikh Muhammud Qazin of the Shuttari Order preached Islam at Vaiśālī and later his mausoleum was erected on a high Buddhist stūpa in that village[3]. "This and the additional emphasis in the succeeding age on sea-trade ( from A. D. 1498 onwards ) and the possible changes in the course of the Gaṇḍaka river making Vaiśālī distant from the river bank must have discouraged the Jainas from taking interest in Vaiśālī".[4]

Thus, while Jainism was unfortunately completely fading out in North Bihar, it witnessed great revival in South Bihar in this and the subsequent periods, as is clear from the study of several inscriptions belonging to this period found in Jaina shrines in South Bihar. Strangely enough, not even one Jaina inscription is found north of the Gaṅgā during this period[5]. In South Bihar, their centre of intense activity evolved round Rajgir-Pāvāpurī-Bihar Sharif area. Rajgir or Rājagṛha had been a Jaina tīrtha since the days of Mahāvīra. In the beginning of the thirteenth century ( 1203 A. D. ) the Jainas came to be associated with Pawapur or Pāvāpurī when an image of Mahāvīra came to be installed there.

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[1] For details, see *Supra*, chaps. II and IV.

[2] For details, see *HM*, chap. viii.

[3] M. H. Kuraishi, *Ancient Monuments in Bihar and Orissa*, 1931, pp. 26–27.

[4] Y. Mishra, *op. cit.* p. 235.

[5] Vide—P. C. Nahar, *Jaina Inscriptions* ( *Jaina-lekha-Saṃgraha* ) Vols. I–II.

Madanakīrti ( second quarter of the thirteenth century ) refers to Pāvāpurī ( with the image of Śrī Vīra Jina ) as one of the twenty-six Jaina tīrthas of his time[1]. Jinaprabha Sūri ( A. D. 1332 ) devotes two full chapters to Pāvāpurī. It is thus clear that the status of Pāvāpurī as a sacred Jaina Tīrtha ( where Mahāvīra is believed to have attained *nirvāṇa* ) had well been established by the fourteenth century.

It appeaars that after the establishment of this *nirvāṇa tīrtha*, the Jainas made serious endeavours to find out the location of their master's birth-place[2], who was known to them as the son of the Jñātrika leader of Kṣatriya—Kuṇḍapura or Kuṇḍalapura and the maternal son of a Licchavi chief. The Digambara Jainas identified this place with Kuṇḍalpur near Nālandā[3]. The Śvetāmbara Jainas, on the other hand, found out a village, Lachwāḍ or Lachuār in south Monghyr as Mahāvīra's birth-place. Thus, Kuṇḍalpur near Nālandā and Lachuār in south Monghyr came to be regarded in course of time as the birth-place of the last Tīrthaṅkara by the Digambaras and the Śvetāmbaras respectively. They came to be regarded as the Jaina places of pilgrimage and several temples and *dharmaśālās* were built up over there. Thus, these places sprang up overnight as Kuṇḍalapura whereas the actual birthplace was completely forgotten by the Jainas. This is further confirmed by a Śvetāmbara Sanskrit text, *Tīrthamālācaityavandana* ( 17th century )[4] which gives seventy-six names of ancient Jaina Tīrthas, partly mythological and partly genuine, but omits Vaiśālī or Kuṇḍapura. In other words, these genuine tīrthas were gradually pushed into oblivion and no body in the Jaina hierarchy cared to find out their exact location.

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[1] *Tīrthakalpa*, chaps. 14 & 21, pp. 8, 41, 282, 287 etc.

[2] K. Bhujbali Śāstrī, *Jaina Siddhānta Bhāskara*, Vol. 10, p. 60.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Charlotte Krause ( ed. ), *Ancient Jaina Hymns*, Scindia Oriental Series No. 2, Ujjain, 1952, pp. 52–64, 118, 127, 133.

Fortunately for Vaiśālī, its ancient glory as the birth-place of the last Tīrthaṅkara was revived in 1948 after a complete neglect of several centuries and since then it has been attracting large numbers of Jaina visitors, throughout the year and particularly on the 21st April ( Caita sudī 13 ) of every year partly through the co-operation of the Government and partly through the efforts of the Vaiśālī Saṁgha[1].

## The Last Phase of Buddhism in Mithilā :

Like Jainism, Buddhism had also its stronghold in Vaiśālī, though its home lay in south Bihar. Its importance can be seen from the fact that the Buddhist texts give us a description of eight of its famous caityas which the Licchavis had given as presents to the Buddha. The recent excavations on the site have also confirmed the literary evidences bearing on the popularity and influence of Buddhism in Vaiśālī and elsewhere in North Bihar which we have fully discussed in the preceding chapter.

The Chinese accounts make it clear that by the time Jainism had lost its force in Vaiśālī, Buddhism was yet a dominant religious force. During the time of Fa-hien's and Yuan Chwang's visit, there were large numbers of vihāras, remains of Ambapāli's garden, Bhikṣus and other places of Buddhist importance, though most of them were now in a dilapidated condition and almost in ruins. Later the Buddhists, like the Jainas, seem to have migrated to south Bihar where the universities of Nālandā, Vikramaśilā, Odantapura and Vajrāsana attracted thousands of pupils to their fold. Moreover, the emergence of Brāhmaṇism in full swing by this time demoralised them to the extent that they found a safe place in their sanctuaries to escape the Brāhmaṇic onslaughts. Thus, from the sixth century A. D. we find that the influence and popularity of Buddhism in North Bihar was almost gone, and it was from Magadha, their stronghold, that they directed their attacks against the Brāhmaṇic logic and thought.

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[1] For details, see J. C. Mathur & Yogendra Mishra ( ed. ), *Homage to Vaiśālī*, Vaiśālī, 1948, pp. 185–204.;

Notwithstanding this total decline in the fortunes of Buddhism in the region north of the Gaṅgā, it must be said that their contributions to the rise, growth and tremendous development of Indian logic and philosophy in the following centuries and earlier have been most significant. Their contributions to ancient language and literature, art, paintings, architecture and sculpture and finally to the growth of democracy have been equally brilliant[1], which may yet be seen all over the country including Mithilā.

But, the story of the last phase of Buddhism is quite interesting. The incorporation of the Buddha into the cosmopolitan and ever-expanding Brāhmaṇic pantheon[2] as one of the ten incarnations in which Lord Viṣṇu comes down on earth at different times, by the orthodox Brāhmaṇas, who were at one time the severest critics of the Buddha and his new Order finally put a finis to the long, long story of the bitter wordy duel and violent wranglings between the adherents of the two opposite schools of thought. The *Vārāhapurāṇa* ( chap. 47 ) says that as a result of the observance of the vow of *Buddhadvādaśī* king Śuddhodana had as his son Lord Viṣṇu in the form of the Buddha[3]. Similar festivals in honour of other incarnations of Viṣṇu to be performed in different months of the year are also described. But, it is not known when and where they were or are in vogue. As a matter of fact, Buddhism, in its essence was not hostile to Brāhmaṇism and, therefore, it is not surprising to find that the Buddha later came to be worshipped as an incarnation by the followers of the Brāhmaṇic faith.

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[1] For details see Satkari Mookerjee's articles in *JBRS* ( Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. I ), 1956, pp. 159–72; A. S. Altekar's papers, *Ibid*, pp. 113–27; Vol. II, pp. 333–41.

[2] *JBRS*. ( Buddha Jayanti Special Issue Vol. I ), 1956. pp. 33–34.

[3] Also see Hemādri's *Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi* ( third quarter of the thirteenth century ), *Vratakhaṇḍa*, Bib. Indica Series, No. 1, pp. 1037–38; Lakṣmīdhara's *Kṛtyakalpataru* ( second quarter of the twelfth century A. D. ), Gaekwad Oriental Series, pp. 331–32. The *Buddhadvādaśī* falls on the twelfth day of the bright half of the month of *Śrāvaṇa*.

Thus a revaluation of the testimony of foreign scholars, inscriptions and contemporary digests makes it clear that with the advent of the thirteenth century A. D., Buddhism was but the last flicker of the lamp, and its old moorings were gone. The Buddhists tried to cope with the changing times and successfully brought in a reformation. Mahāyāna Buddhism was now replaced by Tāntric Buddhism and Sahajiyā Buddhism. Tāntric Buddhism, as we have shown in the preceding chapter, led to further decline and fall of Buddhism in India. And, the process of this disintegration could not be checked inspite of strenuous efforts of Ācārya Atīśa of the Vikramaśilā University, who expelled the Tāntric teachers like Naṭekana and Vajrapāṇi from the monastery of Vikramaśilā in order to maintain the purity of Mahāyāna Buddhism.[1]

The birth of Sahajiyā Buddhism was indeed an expression of revolt against ritualism and formalism and an aversion to scholarship. The leaders of this new sect within the Buddhist fold further attempted to accomodate the lower classes of the community who had by now been completely cut off from this Order. On the basis of the songs in the *Caryūpadas*, regarded as the earliest form of the Bengali and Maithilī literatures, it can safely be presumed that the Sahajiyās had successfully communicated their thoughts to the intelligentsia of the time. The introduction of Sahajiyā Buddhism and the recognition of the Buddha by the Brāhmaṇa legists clearly suggests the revival of Buddhism in Bihar, Bengal and Uttara Pradeśa during the early mediaeval period and after.

A perusal of the literary works of the twelfth century convinces the readers that Buddhism by this time was not disparaged by the Brāhmaṇa community and the followers of Brāhmaṇism, barring a few exceptions. Śrīharṣa and Lakṣmīdhara assigns an honourable place to the Buddha in the Brāhmaṇical pantheon. In the *Naiṣadhacaritam*[1] the Buddha is regarded as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Lakṣmīdhara in his *Kṛtyakalpataru*[2] prescribes that the Buddha is to be worshipped on two occasions : ( i ) on the first of *Caitra* and the seventh of *Vaiśākha*—both time along with other deities. We have further details to be performed on these occasions. Moreover, the Buddha had long been recognised as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu in the *Matsya*[3], *Bhāgavata*[4], *Garuḍa*[5], *Liṅga Purāṇas*[6] etc. besides the *Vārāha Purāṇa* quoted above.

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[1] For details see, B. P. Majumdar's paper in *JBRS* ( Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. I ), pp. 180-82.

Coming to North Bihar, we find that Buddhism continued there in some form or other till the thirteenth century A. D. Dharmasvāmī worshipped an image of Tārā in Vaiśālī[7]. Tārā had been a famous Buddhist deity since this period. A work called *Vajravali* opens with an invocation to God of thunderbolt. It gives details of a rite called *Vajravrata*[8]. Tārā, Mārīci and others are also armed with Vajra. That Tārā became a famous Buddhist deity is evidenced by a painting of the twelfth century A. D. We find among the inscribed miniature paintings of the two palm-leaf mss. a mention of "the Tārā of Vaiśālī in Tīrabhukti[9]". In this connection the Buddha-image in Vaiśālī is remarkable as he is seated in the Vajrāsana pose[10].

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[1] Ed. Handiqui, Canto, xxi, 88; cf. Śūnyātmavāda, Vijñānasāmastya and Sākāratāsiddhi in X, 87 and Tārā in xxii, 136.

[2] *Kṛtyakalpataru*, vol. iii ( *Niyatakālakāṇḍa* ), Gaekwad Oriental Series, vol. cxi, p. 388.

[3] 47, 247, 285–7.

[4] I, 3 ; II, 7, 37 ; VI. 8, 19.

[5] I. 202.

[6] II. 48, 31–32 etc. ; R. C. Hazra, *Studies in Purāṇic Records*, p. 41.

[7] *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 42.

[8] *ASB–MSS* No. G–3855.

[9] *ARASI.*, 1903–04, p. 82.

[10] *Ibid.* pp. 216 ff; also cf. *JASB.* VI. pp. 128–38 ( extracted from the *Journal of Mr. J. Stephenson* ).

It is true that Buddhism, as a religion, had almost declined in Mithilā, but Buddha, the new avatāra, continued to be worshipped as one of the members of the Brāhmaṇical pantheon in Mithilā proper. Caṇḍeśvara, the versatile scholar-Prime minister of Harisiṁhadeva of the Karṇaṭa dynasty of Mithilā[1], has in his *Kṛtyaratnākara* prescribed that the Buddha was to be worshipped on the first day of the bright fortnight of *Caitra* ( *tamase Buddhaye caiva namaḥ prakṛtaye tathā*[2] ). Again, the Buddha was to be worshipped along with the river Gaṅgā[3] on the seventh day of the bright fortnight of the month of Vaiśākha. His image was to be erected on that day and then the festivity was to be held consecutively for three days. Dramas were to be staged, dances to be performed and monks to be fed and given books and dress. On these occasions, alms and clothes were to be distributed to the poorer section of the society.

Further, according to Caṇḍeśvara, the exclusive worship of the Buddha was prescribed on the twelfth day of the month of *Śrāvaṇa*[4]. A golden image of the Buddha was to be worshipped on that day and the golden image was to be given away to a Brāhmaṇa after due worship and ritual. The Buddha was neither born, nor received enlightenment nor *Parinirvāṇa* on any of these dates, but it is well known that the full moon day of the month of Vaiśākha is connected with all the three above mentioned events in his life.[5]

But, it seems that all was not well with a section of the Maithila scholars who still struck a discordant note contrary to the general accomodating spirit of the age. Jyotirīśvara in his *Varṇana-Ratnākara* ( A. D. 1324 ) denounces Buddhism as "degraded and dangerous" ( *bauddha pakṣa-aisana āpātabhī-*

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[1] *HM*, Chap. v.

[2] *Kṛtyaratnākara*, Bibl. Indica Series, p. 105.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 160.

[4] *Ibid*, p. 247.

[5] For details, see B. P. Majumdar, *op. cit*, pp. 171–85.

*ṣaṇa*······)[1] which shows that a section of the Maithilas had not yet reconciled to the fast changing times.[2] From all available accounts, however, it is clear beyond doubt that except a few, the majority of the people had accepted the Buddha as the tenth avatāra of the Hindu pantheon, and worshipped him accordingly.

From the account of the Sūfī saints of Bihar given by S. H. Askarī[3] in a series of articles, it appears that strangely enough the sufīs also chose those very places as their seats which had been in the preceding centuries the strongholds of Buddhism. Sūfīs of all orders like Chistiā, Suhrwardiā, Qadriā, Firdausiā, Madāriā and Shuttāriā contributed to the Islamic mysticism of Bihar. As the Buddhists had promoted a mystic outlook and mitigated the rigours of the caste system it is but natural that the Sūfīs should have found a congenial soil for the inculcation of their religion and faith in these areas. The most celebrated Sūfī saint was Hazrat Sharfuddin Ahmad Maneri ( 661 A. H.–782 A. H. ). In North Bihar, Sheikh Fattu, Sheikh Burhan and Ismail spread the Islamic religion, and at or near Hajipur lived Syed Muhammad, Syed Ahmad ( who died as martyr at Jaruhā ), Abul Fateh Hidayatullah ( at Tankol ), Mir Ibrahim Chisti ; at Basārh, Sheikh Qazin Shuttari ; at Muzaffarpur, Abdur Rahman of Sargyaganj ; at Tajpur ( Purneā ), Sheikh Husain Dhukkurhposh ; at Samastipur, Shah Tajuddin and in Darbhanga, Sheikh Shamsuddin Saman Madari, Pir Shah Nazir and Sheikh Tajuddin Madari. Similarly in South Bihar there were hosts of Sufī saints preaching Sūfīsm and Islam.

**Conclusion :**

From the above facts we infer centain irresistible conclusions. The teachings of Buddha went against the grain of

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[1] *VR*, p. 39.

[2] For other details see *HM*, p. 374.

[3] *JBRS*. 1951 ( March–June ) ; *Historical Miscellany*, published by the Patna College Archaeological and Historical Society, pp. 46–70.

Hindu psychology and as such could not take an abiding root in India. Hinduism was based on *Śabdapramāṇa* ( the *Vedas* ) whereas Buddha repudiated all authority and traditions. The Hindus were metaphysical while the Buddhists showed indifference towards it. The existence or non-existence of God did not at all interest Buddha as, according to him, man was the architect of his own future. Naturally therefore, there is no place for ritualism in Buddhism. Moreover, he did not succeed in compelling his hearers or followers to adopt an attitude of suspended judgment on the ultimate question. His conception of Dharma was not sufficiently concrete for practical purposes. The result was obvious. The Buddha gradually came to be deified and Buddhism was very much influenced by the Hindu thought. On the other hand, Buddhism too exercised a great, almost overwhelming influence on Hinduism. It gave birth to neo-Hinduism which absorbed the best elements of Buddhism. It was the result of this influence that the Śaivas borrowed the monistic and contemplative elements of Mahāyāna Buddhism; the Vaiṣṇavas borrowed devotional and humanitarian elements; the Vairāgīs replaced philanthropic Mahāyāṇa Śramaṇas and the Buddha was given a place in the Hindu pantheon as the tenth avatāra[1].

There is no doubt that Mahāyāna was built on wholesale borrowing from Hinduism, and this process of intermingling went on and on until in the sixth century A. D. Buddhism was borrowing even from Śāktism, the most esoteric form of Hinduism. It ultimately gave rise to Tāntricism and Vajrayāna with the result that the faminine divinities now found their way in to Buddhist pantheon. Prajñāpāramitā was the personification of the qualities of the Boddhisattva. The theme, being like the Hindu view that the God might best be approached through Goddess, was like the Śakti of the Hindu pantheon. It was thought in sexual unions, an idea as old as the *Ṛgveda* itself. Sexual symbolisms were introduced combined with a new magical mysticism[1]. It could best be attained by acquiring magical power, *Vajra* ( thunderbolt ) and as such this third school ( eighth century A. D. ) came to be known as the Vajrayāna in Eastern India and grew rapidly in Bihar and Bengal. The chief divinities were now Tārā, Mātaṅgi, Piśācī, Yoginī and Ḍākinīs. This new school was responsible for the presentation of the Buddha in ferocious poses. It was this form of Buddhism modified by primitive local cults and practices which was firmly established in Tibet as a result of missions sent from the great Vajrayāna monastery of Vikramaśilā[2], and which dominates the Buddhist art of the period and after.

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[1] R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar : The Homeland of Buddhism*, pp. 85-86.

The Sahājiyā sect of Bengal and Bihar classed as Vaiṣṇavas also originated from the decadent Buddhism of later times. A good number of works were composed in Bengali on this cult. This process of assimilation began when in about the sixth century A. D., Sūnyavāda, the highest doctrine of Buddhist philosophy of the Mādhyamika school, was accepted as the sole truth in the *Yogavāśiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* which attempted at bringing about a harmony between this doctrine and the theme of the *Gītā*. In the eighth century, Ācārya Gauḍapāda of Bengal affiliated the said doctrine to the Vedānta which ultimately became the theme of the *Brahmasūtras*, at the hands of his grand disciple, Śaṁkara and finally attained a predominant position in the Indian philosophical thought[3]. It is, therefore, sometimes argued that Śaṁkara drove away Buddhism out of India. He represents the complete synthesis of Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist streams of thought, and his concept of *Brahma* is nothing but neo-Sūnyavāda. In his *Daśāvatāra Stotram* he described the Buddha as the prince among the Yagīs who dwelt in the centre of his heart. He was, therefore, called a

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 125.

[2] For other details, see *Ibid*, pp. 125–27.

[3] H. Vedāntaśāstrī in *JBRS*. ( Buddha Jayanti Special Issue. Vol. I ) 1956, pp. 73–74.

*pracchanna Bauddha.* The acceptance of his view by Vācaspati, the celebrated Maithila thinker ( vide-his *Bhāmatī* ) was ultimately responsible for the worship of the Buddha as the tenth avatāra in Mithilā proper, though the conflict of economic interest perhaps, for the time being, reinforced the hostility of the Mīmāṁsaka Brāhmaṇas towards the Buddhist monks[1]. But then, it was a passing phase for we know that a commentary on the original *Yogavāśiṣṭha*, namely *Vivartavāda* alias *Māyāvāda* was also written by Ānandabodhendra Bhaṭṭāraka of the Śaṁkara school, several centuries after Śaṁkara himself, in order to propagate this pseudo-Buddhistic faith[2]. According to R. C. Temple, "Do we not see here the ideas that led to the latter day Parameśvara, the supreme of the Hinduism ? Indeed, there is very much of Hinduism in the Ādi Buddha who is the Svayambhū or self-being; in *Avilokiteśvara*, the Redeemer; in *Mañjuśrī* the Helper, and the Bodhisattvas generally, who are now fully developed. In fact, the rise of Yogācāra school explores the tenets of Sāṁkhyas, Vaiśeṣikas, Pāsupatas and other philosophical schools and religious denominations of Brāhmaṇa origin[3]".

With the emergence of Vaiṣṇavism in a new form in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Buddha was taken as an avatāra, entirely different from the *Bhāgavata* by Jayadeva in Bengal and others in Mithilā.

The age-old Buddhist hostility to the caste-rigidity was continued in neo-Vaiṣṇavism which accepted caste-system, as a mere social institution, without any bearing on religion and the creed of non-violence preached by Buddhism was accepted by Vaiṣṇavism.

The Sahajiyā sect still flourishes in many places, for instance in Bengal. Though inclined towards Vaiṣṇavism it has really deduced itself from the old *Sahajasiddhi* of Tāntric Buddhism

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1. R. K. Choudhary, *op. cit.* p. 87.
2. H. Vedāntaśāstrī, *op. cit.* p. 75.
3. Quoted, R. K. Choudhary, *op. cit.* p. 87.

and till now in their esoteric Sādhana they use Buddhistic terminology[1].

The image of Buddha is worshiped here and there in Bengal and Mithilā and other places, somewhere as Viṣṇu, somewhere as Śiva and somewhere as some Goddess. The worship of some gods and goddesses, the images of which are but images of Buddha, is even now in charge of lower class people such as Ḍomas, Namaḥśūdras etc., which is certainly reminiscent of Buddhist practices[2].

Dharma is one of the three *ratnas* of Buddhism and the worship of Dharma or Dharmarāja is very popular with a section of the Brāhmaṇas as well as the masses, especially of the lower classes in Mithilā and Bengal[3].

Thus, before the dawn of the seventeenth century Buddhism lost its entity as an independent faith and Vaiṣṇavism finally incorporated the faith of the Buddha into the parent-stock. The process was accelerated by the rising tide of Muslim invasion which swept over Bengal and Bihar and gave a shattering blow to the last vestige of Buddhism. The process that had begun in the sixth century A. D. took final shape in the closing part of the twelfth century when Buddha was accepted as an avatāra by the Brāhmaṇas including the Maithilas all over the country, and running through different phases over a period of four hundred years, Buddhism became fully incorporated into the body of Hinduism in the later part of the sixteenth century, mainly through the medium of neo-Vaiṣṇavism.

Thus died Buddhism in Mithilā, Bengal and elsewhere, but death concerns the body, and not the soul. And, in this case also we find that Buddhism is still living, though in a different garb. A close study on comparative basis would show that Buddhism has been incorporated into the body of Hinduism and the former still lives in the cults of the Vaiṣṇavas, the Sahajiyās, the Śaivas, the Bauls, the Dervishes, the Sūfīs, the Saṅnyāsīs[1] and also in Tāntricism and Advaitavedānta.

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[1] H. Vedāntaśāstrī. *op. cit.* p. 75.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

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[1] Even now in village Nahāra Bhagavatipura, near village Koilakh in Madhubani sub-division, there is a Durgā-temple in which stray finds of Buddhist sculptures are collected. There is no image of Durgā in the said temple, and only the Buddhist images are worshipped. There are many Saṅnyāsīs there, who now form a caste and trace their origin from their Buddhist ancestors. A coin of Vigrahapāla III was also discovered there which is now in possession of Prof. Tantranāth Jhā of C. M. College, Darbhanga, who kindly gave me this information.

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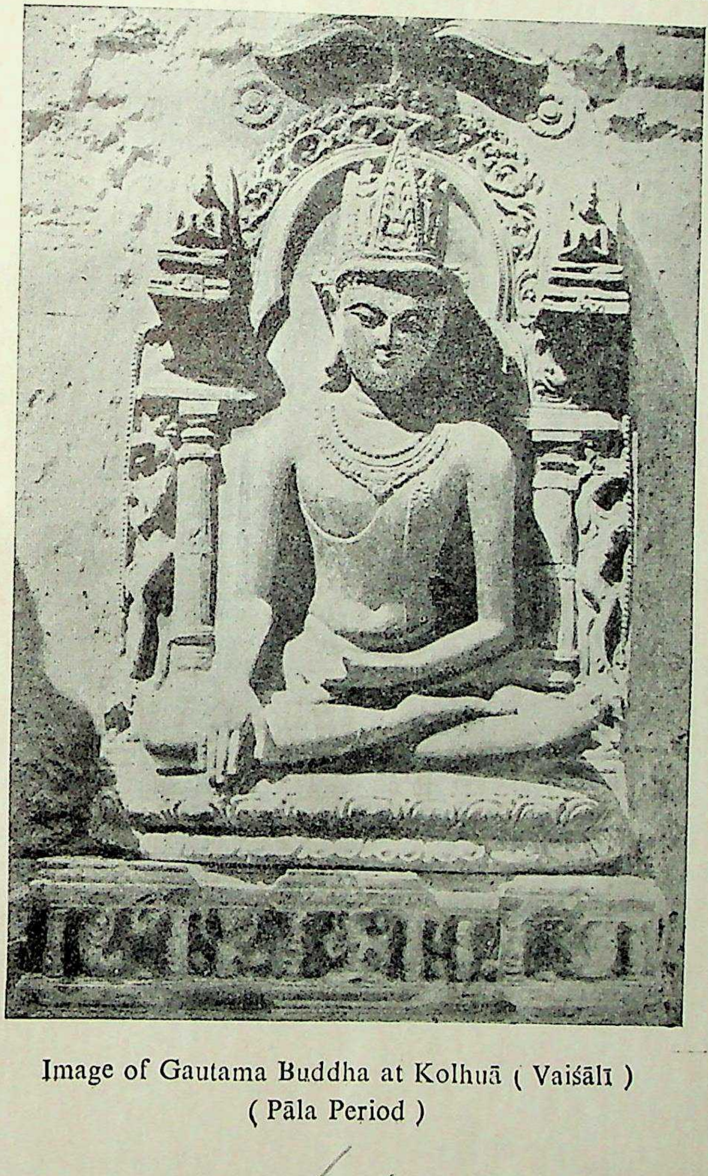
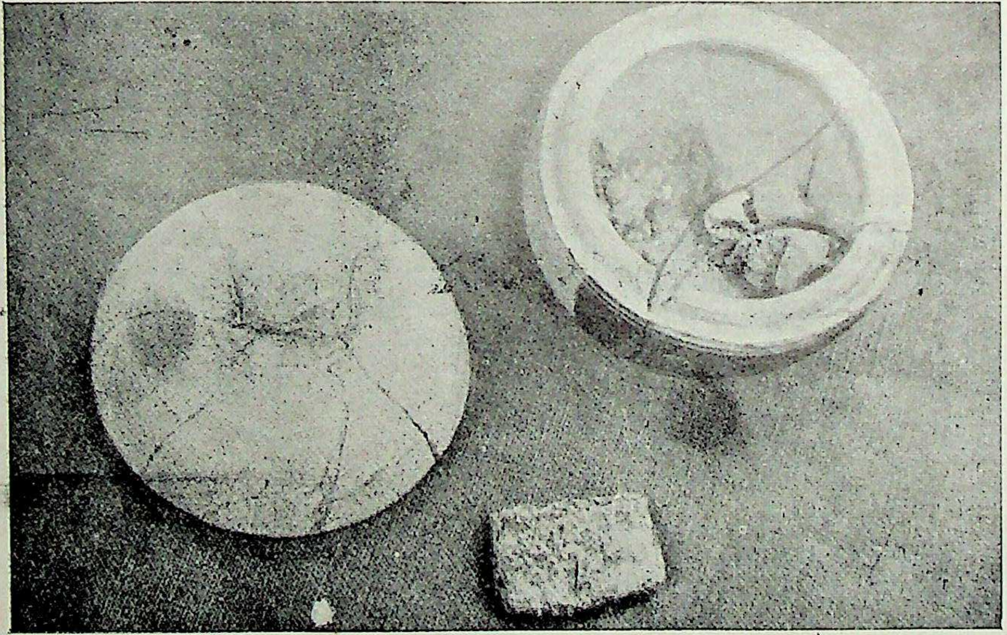


Image of Gautama Buddha at Kolhuā ( Vaiśālī )
( Pāla Period )

PLATE II



The bodily remains of Gautama Buddha excavated at Vaiśālī near the Kharaunā Pokhar in March, 1958 ( Date—*Circa* 487 B. C. )

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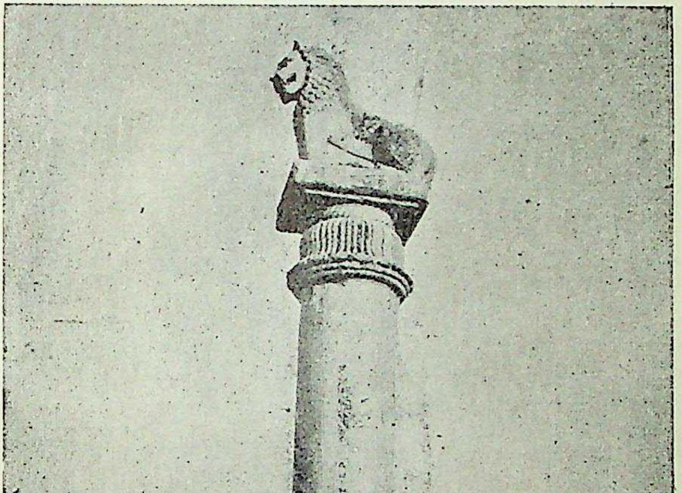
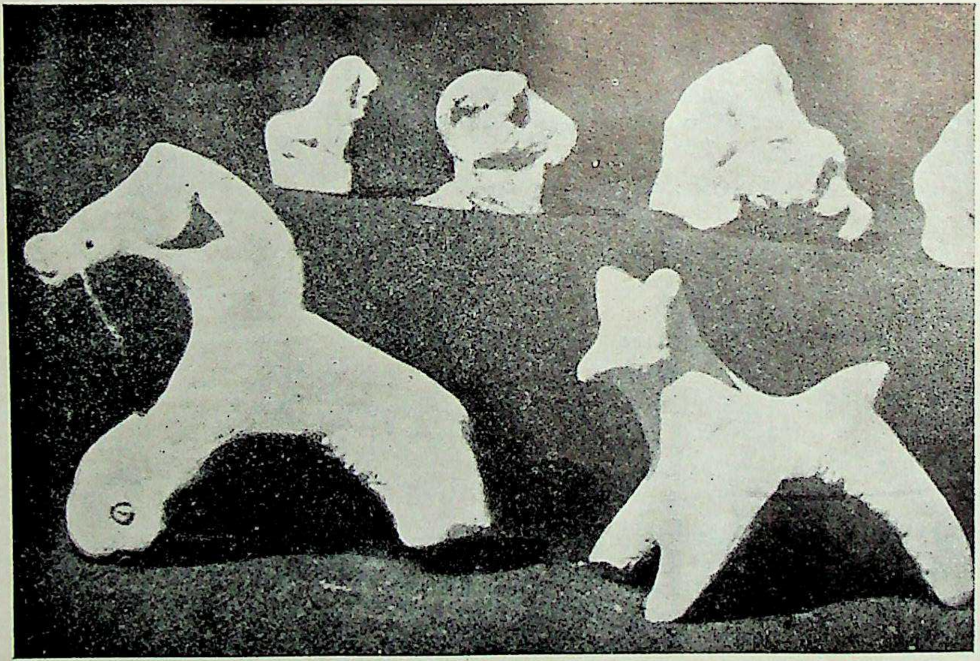


The Aśokan Pillar at Kolhuā ( Vaiśālī )
( Third Century B. C. )

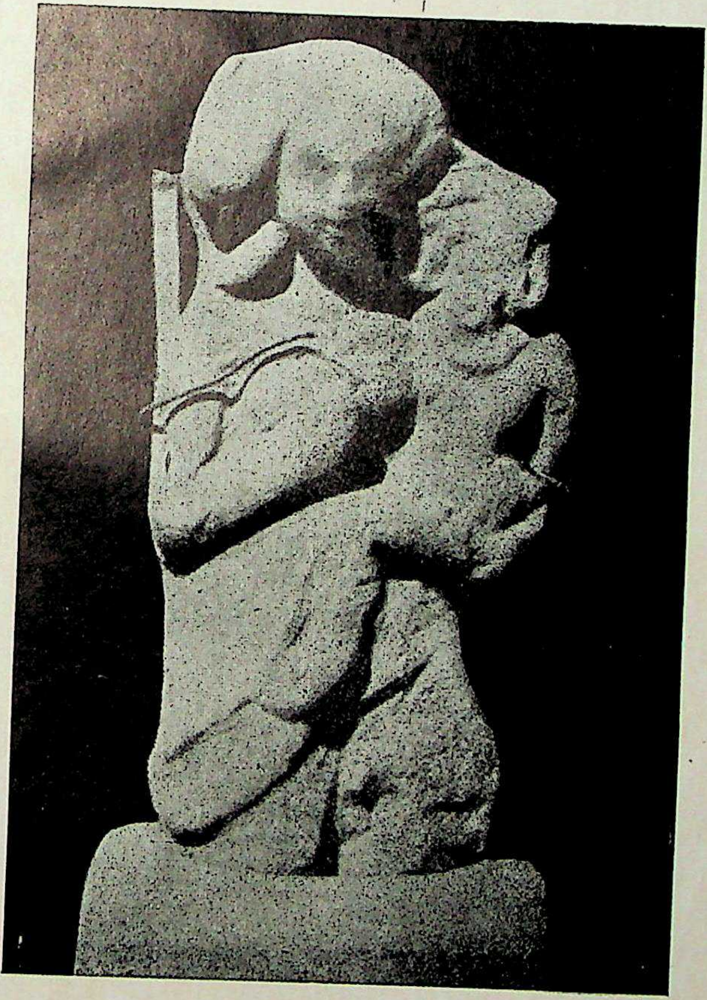
PLATE IV

PLATE IV



Terracotta Toys from Vaiśālī ( Animals ) ( Buddhist Period )

PLATE V



A Terracotta from Vaiśālī ( Mother and Child )
( Buddhist Period )

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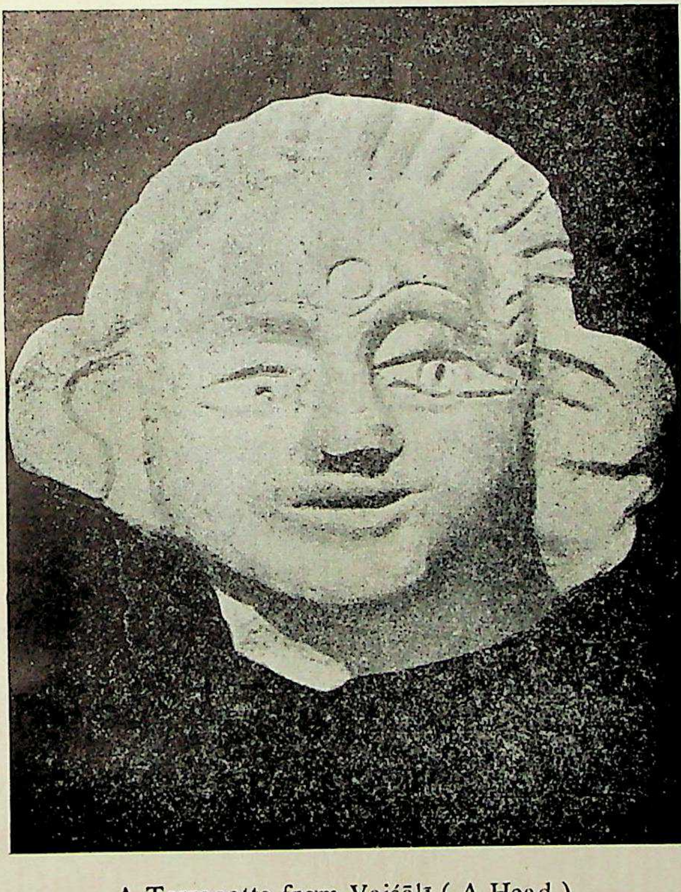
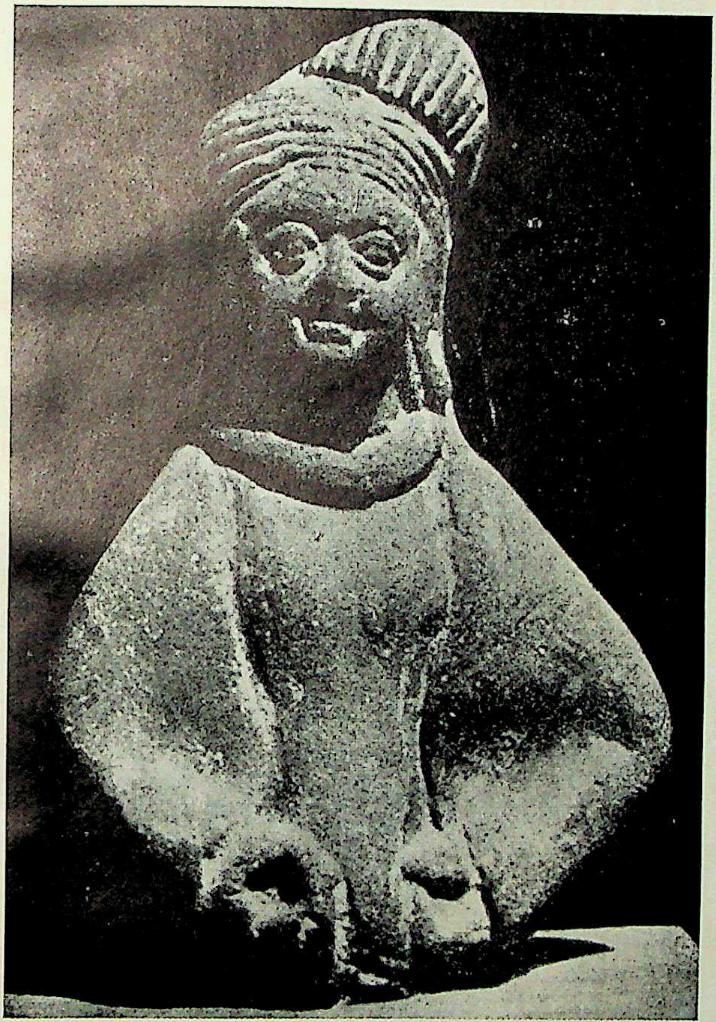


A Terracotta from Vaiśālī ( A Head )
( Buddhist Period )

PLATE VI



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